





Clark's Peoples Commentary

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

A POPULAR COMMENTARY UPON A CRITICAL
BASIS, ESPECIALLY DESIGNED FOR PASTORS
AND SUNDAY SCHOOLS ♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

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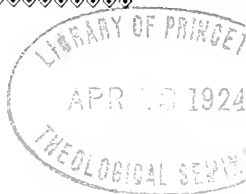
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INTRODUCTION.

THE ANTIQUITY OF THE ACTS.

The Book of the Acts may be traced back to the first century of the Christian era. It is found in the Greek original in no less than about two hundred and sixty of the later or Cursive manuscripts; and in eight or nine of the chief Uncial or earlier manuscripts. Of the latter are the four oldest, the Ephraim in the Imperial Library of Paris, and the Alexandrine in the British Museum at London, both written about the middle of the fifth century; the Sinaitic in the Imperial Library at St. Petersburg, and the Vatican in the Vatican Library at Rome, both written about the middle of the fourth century. Earlier manuscripts than these are presupposed by the ancient versions of the New Testament extending further back over two centuries. Thus the Acts is found in the Latin version of Jerome of the fourth century, the Bashmuric, an Egyptian version of the third century, and, besides other earlier versions, in the Peshito Syriac, and the Old Latin, near the beginning of the second century. The two latter imply an earlier Greek original of the first century. To this may be added the testimony of the early catalogues of the New Testament books, and of early Christian writers. Thus the book of the Acts is named in the catalogue of Eusebius (A. D. 315), of Origen (A. D. 237), and of the Peshito version early in the second century, implying that it was already recognized as a part of the New Testament writings. It is referred to frequently by Tertullian, who lived about A. D. 200, and by Clement of Alexandria, who flourished about A. D. 190. It is mentioned in the Muratorian fragment written before A. D. 170. Hegesippus, who lived in the early part of the second century, is said to have written a commentary upon it. Polycarp, who was martyred A. D. 167, appears to quote Acts 10: 41 in his Epistle to the Smyrneans, (§3); and Ignatius, who died A. D. 107, seems to allude to Acts 2: 41 in his Epistle to the Philippians, (§1). All these imply its previous existence; and as a sequel to the third Gospel it manifestly appears as the product of the first century. And this accords with the exact character, historical contents, and vivid style of the book, as written at or near the time of the events, and with the voice of antiquity. All attempts to prove that it was written in the second century have resulted in signal failures.

ITS AUTHENTICITY.

Of the truthfulness and correctness of the narrative in the Acts there can be no doubt. This appears:

1. In its minute agreement with contemporaneous history and geography. It alludes to more than a hundred towns and cities without a single error. Its references to persons, places, and events in Palestine exhibit remarkable accuracy. It traces more or less closely the journeys of Paul through Asia Minor, Greece, and to Rome, and everywhere accords with ancient history and geography. Its descriptions of customs, manners, and usages correspond with what we know of them from other sources. Its allusions to public officials at Paphos, Philippi, Thessalonica, Athens, Corinth, Ephesus, Melita, and Rome are confirmed by contemporaneous writers and ancient inscriptions. And in all this, the whole narrative, without any effort toward consistency or any indication of contrivance, exhibits that simplicity and artlessness which accompany the testimony of one in whom there is no guile.

2. In the agreement of the speeches and Epistles of Peter, James, and Paul, in style and thought. Each of these had striking peculiarities, and their individuality is marked in their respective addresses and Epistles. The unstudied character of these agreements, without the least sign of any attempt at imitation, is an evidence of their truthfulness. (See notes on 2 : 41 ; 3 : 26 ; 4 : 20 ; 13 : 29 ; 20 : 18, 19, 24, 32.)

3. In the many remarkable correspondences between the narrative of the Acts and the Epistles of Paul. These have reference to the incidental and personal experiences, and are such as could not have been the result of accident or design. There is no trace of the use of the Epistles in the Acts, nor of the use of the Acts in the Epistles. Yet the one confirms and supplements the other without a single contradiction. These correspondences are aptly styled by Dr. Paley "undesigned coincidences." And the more obscure they are the stronger the argument derived from them. By their means Dr. Paley in his *Horæ Paulinæ* has unanswerably demonstrated the truth of the Acts. These are presented to the eye and noted upon in Clark's *Harmonic Arrangement of the Acts*.

4. In standing the test of modern criticism. No book has been more thoroughly examined, compared, and sifted, both by friends and foes, than the Acts of the Apostles. Every journey and every voyage have been retraced, and every place has been revisited for the purpose of verifying the narrative. With it the results of modern discovery have been carefully compared, and to it the latest scientific investigations have been applied; and in every instance the book of Acts has stood the test. Its minute and topographical peculiarities, and its hundreds of incidental allusions, have stood the sharpest criticism, and have been confirmed by the writings of profane historians, the coins and monuments of the apostolic age, and the researches of travelers and scholars.

Such wonderful accuracy indicates, not only the carefulness and correctness of the writer, but also his divine guidance in the avoidance of error.

ITS AUTHORSHIP.

The author of the Acts was with Paul at Philippi (16:10-13), and afterwards his traveling companion from thence to Jerusalem, and from Caesarea to Rome (chapters 21, 27, 28). This is evident from the use of the first person. It could not have been Silas (16:19-40) nor Timothy (20:4,5), for these are spoken of in the third person, whereas the writer speaks of himself in the first person, and is thus distinguished, not only from them, but also from all other persons named in the Acts. The most natural conclusion is that it was Luke who was with Paul at Rome (Philem. 24; Col. 4:14), and is styled by him, "Luke the beloved physician" (Col. 4:14). This is confirmed by its relation to the third Gospel. It is evident that both books were written by the same author. Both are addressed to Theophilus, and a reference is made to a former treatise in Acts 1:1. There is a strong resemblance in the style of the two books. Dr. Thayer in his *Greek Lexicon of the New Testament* notes sixty-one words which are found only in the Gospel of Luke and in the Acts. We find in both a knowledge of disease and the use of medical terms such as we should expect in the writing of a physician. (Luke 4:38; 8:43, 44; Acts 3:7; 12:23; 13:11; 28:8.) The narrative throughout the Acts exhibits the same careful research as that shown in Luke's Gospel; and the style is everywhere the same, except where it reports the speeches or writings of others. It is manifestly not the work of two or more authors, nor a mere compilation, but the continuous and harmonious narrative of one man, that of Luke, the writer of the third Gospel. Such, too, is the uniform testimony of early Christian writers, and there comes to us no dissent from early tradition.

Very little is known of *Luke*, and he is only mentioned three times in the New Testament. See references above. Paul probably speaks of him in 2 Cor. 8:18, 19, when writing from Philippi, as "the brother whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches" (20:6). That he was a Gentile appears from Col. 4:11-14, where he is distinguished from those of the circumcision, and from his name *Lucas*, an abbreviation of *Lucanus*. The purity of his Greek and his intimate knowledge of that language point also to his heathen extraction. At the same time his familiarity with the Jewish religion, ceremonies, and customs, makes it probable that in early life he had been at least a proselyte of the gate. Early tradition fixes his birthplace at Antioch. The traditions regarding his later life do not agree. According to one he died a martyr in Greece in his eightieth year. According to others, perhaps more trustworthy, he died a natural death. Jerome in his life of Luke, says that he died at the age of eighty-four, that his bones were trans-

ported from Achaia to Constantinople in the twenty-eighth year of Constantine. Compare Introduction to Luke's Gospel.

TIME AND PLACE OF ITS COMPOSITION.

The most probable date of Paul's arrival at Rome was the spring of A. D. 61; and the narrative of the Acts extends two years later to A. D. 63. But it is implied throughout that Jerusalem and the temple were standing and there is no reference to their destruction, which occurred A. D. 70. It may therefore be said that the Acts was published between the Spring of A. D. 63 and 70. But its abrupt termination, and the absence of any reference to Paul afterward, either to his liberation or martyrdom, seem to point to the close of the two years of Paul's imprisonment as the time of its completion and publication. And if this be the date, then it is most natural to conclude that Luke wrote it at Rome during these two years, and under Paul's direction.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION.

In about one-third of the Acts Luke writes as an eye witness—16:10-40; 20:6, to the end of the book. From Paul he would naturally get accounts of his persecution, conversion, and missionary journeys. From Philip of Cesarea he would learn regarding the appointment of the seven, the preaching in Samaria, and the conversion and baptism of the eunuch; and in connection with Paul, of the speech and martyrdom of Stephen. From James, as well as Paul, he could obtain all needful information regarding the Apostolic Conference at Jerusalem, and most of the events recorded in the early part of the Acts. While Paul was imprisoned at Cesarea, Luke was doubtless gathering materials from "eye witnesses and ministers of the word" and preparing his Gospel (Luke 1:2), and at the same time he would naturally gather much material for the Acts. He very likely met with Peter, and John, and Mary the mother of Mark, and with many others of the one hundred and twenty (1:15), from whom he gathered accounts of Pentecost and of subsequent events. At Cesarea he could receive corroborative accounts of the conversion of Cornelius and the death of Herod.

In this connection it is interesting to notice the speeches of the Acts, given more or less fully by Luke, with marks of condensation. All of these in style and thought indicate their respective authors; yet their setting into the narrative shows the hand and style of Luke. Alford has shown from Paul's speech in Hebrew before the Jewish mob (22:1-21), that Luke probably translated it into Greek from having heard it delivered. So probably the speeches of Peter and Stephen were written out by some who heard them; and Luke, under the guidance of the Spirit, has truly presented their substance or their very words, as the Spirit deemed important.

THE DESIGN AND NATURE OF THE ACTS.

The design of a writer must be distinguished from the objects accomplished by his work, or the providential uses made of it. This is especially true of the Acts. As a sequel to Luke's Gospel it naturally has a similar design. This Luke thus expresses to Theophilus, "That thou mightest know the certainty concerning the things wherein thou was instructed." (Luke 1: 4.) Not that it was intended for Theophilus alone, but he was selected as a person of rank, representing Christians generally, both Jews and Gentiles. The same general design is manifested in the Acts. As in his Gospel Luke tells "concerning all things that Jesus began to do and teach" (1: 1), so in the Acts he continues to narrate what Jesus, after his resurrection and ascension, began to do and teach through his Holy Spirit in connection with his disciples. The *doing* consisted in organizing and developing the church at Jerusalem, its baptism in the Holy Spirit, in the conversion of men, and in planting churches both among Jews and Gentiles. The *teaching* consisted in the guidance of the Apostles in preaching the gospel, training the converts, and gathering them into churches; also in the apprehension of truth, and making known its relations to both Jews and Gentiles, and their relation to each other. The book is emphatically a book of *beginnings*, at Jerusalem, in Samaria, throughout Judea, at Antioch, throughout Asia Minor, and Greece and at Rome. It consists of sketches of the success of the early preachers of the gospel, attended by the Holy Spirit, from Jerusalem the capital of Judaism to Rome the metropolis of the heathen world. It thus presents the fulfillment of our Lord's prediction, "Ye shall be my witnesses, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (1: 8); with the methods and measures by which this was accomplished.

ITS RELATION TO THE GOSPELS AND THE EPISTLES.

The Acts of the Apostles is the central book of the New Testament. Toward it the Gospels converge, as preparatory; from it the Epistles diverge, as complemental. The Gospel narratives culminate in the resurrection of Christ; the book of Acts starts with the risen and ascended Saviour, and narrate how he wrought with and through his disciples by the Holy Spirit. And each step in the progress of this work is attributed with equal distinctness to the Lord Jesus and to the Holy Spirit. (1: 2; 2: 4, 17, 33, 38; 4: 10, 31; 5: 14, 19.) The presence of Jesus with his disciples for forty days, and the account of his ascension, connect the Acts with the Gospels. The baptism of John (10: 37; 13: 24; 18: 25; 19: 4), the baptism of the Holy Spirit (1: 5, 8; 11: 16), the preaching of Jesus and the resurrection (4: 3, 33; 17: 18; 24: 15), the appearance of Jesus to Stephen and to Saul of Tarsus (7: 53; 9: 17), and his presence with his disciples in fulfillment of his last commission, are connecting links between the Acts and the Gos-

pels. Viewed as an account of the continued work of our Lord, it has been styled the Fifth Gospel; as illustrating the power and work of the Holy Spirit, the Gospel of the Spirit; and, as combining the two, the Gospel of the Post-Ascension.

No less vital is the relation of the Acts with the Epistles. The former in numerous places are supplemented by the latter, and the latter cannot be fully understood without the historical details of the former. As the Gospels present the fundamental truths of Christianity, and the Acts its individual and church life, so the Epistles present more fully and systematically its doctrines and practical teachings. The gifts of the Spirit (*Acts 2 and 1 Cor. 12*), the benevolence, the authority, and the officials of the church, the passing away of the Old Testament Economy, the throwing down of the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles, the doctrines of repentance and justification by faith, of the resurrection and the final judgment, and the practices of baptism, the Lord's Supper, and the ordination of the ministry, are some of the many links connecting the Acts with the Epistles. The following parallel passages, taken from the Author's *Harmonic Arrangement of the Acts*, exhibit the principal historical connections of the two:

ACTS.	EPISTLES.	ACTS.	EPISTLES.
1: 3.	1 Cor. 15: 3-8.	18: 5.	{ 2 Cor. 1: 19.
2: 15, 16.	2 Peter 1: 21.		{ 1 Thess. 3: 6.
2: 32.	1 Cor. 15: 6	18: 8, 17.	1 Cor. 1: 1, 14.
2: 33.	1 Peter 1: 12.	18: 26.	1 Cor. 16: 19.
6: 1.	1 Tim. 5: 9, 10.	19: 20.	1 Cor. 16: 8-10.
9: 20-22.	Gal. 1: 15, 16.	19: 21.	Rom. 1: 13.
9: 25.	2 Cor. 11: 32, 33.	19: 27.	Eph. 2: 20, 21.
9: 26, 30.	Gal. 1: 18-24.		{ 2 Cor. 2: 12.
12: 25.	2 Cor. 12: 2	20: 1.	{ 2 Cor. 7: 5.
13: 14.	2 Cor. 11: 26.		{ Rom. 15: 19.
14: 5, 6.	2 Tim. 3: 10, 11.		{ 2 Cor. 1: 16.
14: 19.	2 Cor. 11: 25.	20: 2.	{ 2 Cor. 12: 14.
15: 1-10.	Gal. 2: 1-10.		{ 2 Cor. 13: 1.
15: 23.	James 1: 1.	20: 4.	{ Rom. 16: 1, 21, 23.
16: 1.	{ 2 Tim. 1: 5.		{ Rom. 15: 25, 26.
	{ 2 Tim. 3: 15.	20: 34, 35.	1 Cor. 4: 11, 12.
16: 3.	{ 1 Cor. 9: 20.	21: 23-26.	1 Cor. 9: 19-22.
16: 6.	{ 1 Tim. 4: 14.	23: 5.	Rom. 13: 1.
16: 13	Gal. 4: 13.		{ Rom. 15: 25, 26.
	Phil. 4: 2, 3.	24: 17.	1 Cor. 16: 3.
16: 23, 24.	{ Phil. 1: 29, 30.		{ 2 Cor. 8: 1, 2.
	{ 2 Cor. 11: 25.	26: 20.	{ 2 Cor. 9: 1, 2.
17: 3.	{ 1 Thess. 2: 2.	28: 16.	Rom. 15: 18, 19.
17: 5, 6.	1 Thess. 1: 5-9		Phil. 1: 12-14.
17: 14, 15.	1 Thess. 2: 9, 14.	28: 30, 31.	{ Eph. 6: 18-20.
	1 Thess. 3: 1, 2.		{ Phil. 2, 23, 24.
18: 3.	{ 1 Cor. 4: 11, 12.		{ Philem. 9, 22.
	{ 2 Cor. 11: 8, 9.		

QUOTATIONS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT.

The relation of the Acts to the Old Testament is seen in its historical and incidental allusions, but especially in its numerous quotations. There are ninety places in the Acts where quotations are made from no less than one hundred and thirty passages of the Old Testament. These

are found principally in the speeches of Peter and Paul, James and Stephen. Of these, twenty-seven are from the book of Exodus, twenty from the Psalms, nineteen from Genesis, fourteen from Isaiah, eleven from Deuteronomy, six from Jeremiah, three from Numbers, two from Joshua, first Kings, and Amos, each, and one from Leviticus, first Samuel, first Chronicles, Jeremiah, Hosea, and Habakkuk, each. By "book of the prophets" (7:42), is meant the twelve minor prophets, whom the Jews reckoned in one collection.

The quotations principally follow the Greek of the Septuagint version, which was in common use in that day, especially among foreign Jews, but with frequent variations, and sometimes apparent corrections from the Hebrew. Such variations may be partly accounted for from the custom of quoting from memory. It was also the inner meaning, the spiritual significance which was sought after. Thus Peter and others in the Acts generally used the Septuagint as their guide and source of quotation, following its defects in unimportant points, but, under the guidance of the promised Spirit, correcting it and even interpreting it, where it was necessary.

These quotations may be divided into five kinds: (1) *Complete* quotations, complete both in sense and form. That found in 28: 26, 27, from Isa. 6: 9, 10, is a good example. Others may be found in 2: 25-28; 4: 25, 26; 13: 33. (2) *Abridged* quotations, from which words or phrases are omitted, generally from the body of the quotation. Thus 7: 3 is quoted from Gen. 12: 1, and the phrase "and from thy father's house" is omitted after "from thy kindred." The latter clause, however, includes the idea of the former. In such abridgements nothing is generally lost from the essential sense. (3) *Partial* quotations, consisting of words and phrases. Thus Stephen (7:2) quotes "God of Glory" from Ps. 29: 3, and "Turned back again to Egypt" (7:39) from Num. 14: 3. (4) *Composite* quotations, in which two or more are united and merged into one. Thus in 3: 22, 23, Peter quotes from Deut. 18: 18, 19, and substitutes for the last clause of verse 19, "I will require it of him," the last clause of Lev. 23: 29, "Shall be destroyed from among his people." The latter is more definite, and as a legal formula, defines the mode of punishment. Other examples are found in 2: 30 and 7: 51. (5) *Complex* quotations, which cannot be assigned to any of the above, but combine together several species. Thus 7: 6 is an indirect quotation from Gen. 15: 13, with some changes in the order of the words, and is continued in verse 7, with a direct quotation from Exod. 3: 12. So, also, in 15: 16-18, there is a peculiar combination of three quotations principally from Amos 9: 11, 12. It begins with "I will return," from Jer. 12: 15, and closes with, "Saith the Lord who maketh these things known from of old" (Revised version), from Isa. 45: 21.

The design of these quotations was fivefold: (1) To note the ful-

fillment of prophecy. Twenty-two predictions are quoted, sixteen of which have reference to the Messiah. These Messianic predictions were given as a ground of confidence in God and are of three kinds: *First*, those that have direct and exclusive reference to Christ, as in 2: 34, 35, from Psalm 110: 1. *Second*, those that are *direct*, but are *inclusive*, having primary reference to Christ, but including others secondarily in their fulfillment. Thus the quotation from the second Psalm (4: 25-28) refers primarily to Christ, but it may include also a secondary reference to those who preceded his advent as representative of his divine sovereignty. Its fulfillment need not be restricted to any one event or combination of events, but may be found all along the line of man's opposition to Christ. *Third*, those which refer typically to Christ as the antitype. Thus Acts 4: 11 probably referred primarily to Zerubbabel, who was himself a type of Christ. (2) To give emphasis to some truth, as in 7: 51; 13: 18; 17: 31. (3) To present some historical fact. Many examples are found in Stephen's defense and in Paul's address at Antioch, in Pisidia. (4) To comfort and encourage. Thus the Lord encouraged Paul at Cornith, "Be not afraid, for I am with thee," from Isa. 43: 5, and Jer. 8: 1, reminding him of his presence with his prophets of old and their faithful obedience. (5) As the best and most appropriate vehicle of expression. The Scriptures were the classics of the Jewish people. In them the Jewish youths were taught from their earliest years. (2 Tim. 3: 15.) It was natural that their thoughts should often take the garb of Scripture, especially when the language was familiar for its beauty, force, or sublimity. Doubtless some of their quotations were entirely undesigned. In every address in the Acts their familiarity with the Scriptures is noticeable. Paul's mind seemed overflowing with Scripture truth and phraseology. (See 13: 10; 14: 15; 17: 24, 25; 20: 28-32). While the Old Testament was thus freely quoted, no instance can be found in the Acts, where a passage is improperly used, or unbecomingly applied.

THE EVIDENTIAL VALUE OF THE ACTS.

The discussion thus far has shown the reliability of Luke as a witness, and the trustworthiness of his writings. It is doubtful whether any ancient or modern historian could be subjected to such an ordeal as he has undergone and come forth unhurt. No real error has been made out against him; but such an exactness has been discovered, as to be suggestive of the guidance of the Holy Spirit. But if this appears to be true of the Acts, it is natural to believe the same in regard to his Gospel. The Acts of the Apostles thus becomes a strong evidence of the truth of Christianity. And even this is strengthened when we consider particular portions, such as the Conversion of Paul, and his Voyage and Shipwreck. But more than this. While it incidentally confirms other

portions of the New Testament, by its relations to them, it especially, by its relations to the Old Testament Scriptures, gives the weight of its authority to their historical facts and to the books as they have come down to us. Not only is every part of the Old Testament quoted, as above noticed, but the whole is alluded to at least five times in the Acts. (13 : 15, 17 : 2, 11 : 18 : 24 28.) And these are appealed to as standards of authority, as the word of God. They who would make the tabernacle a later structure and rearrange the books of Moses, run not only against Peter, Stephen, Luke, and Paul, but ignore their guiding spirit, and that historical knowledge within their reach, but unknown to us.

INSPIRATION OF THE ACTS.

1. The arguments for the inspiration of the third Gospel may be largely used for the inspiration of the Acts, which is a sequel to that Gospel. 2. The proofs of the authenticity of the Acts tend also to prove its inspiration. 3. The Apostles had been promised inspiration by the Spirit, both for their guidance into all the truth, and also for special occasions. (John 16 : 13-15 ; Matt. 10 : 19, 20.) Others had inspired gifts. Paul was a "called Apostle" (Rom. 1 : 1), and recognized special supernatural guidance both for himself and certain co-laborers (1 Cor. 2 : 6, 10 : 12 : 10). Miraculous gifts of the Spirit were bestowed upon many others besides the Apostles on the day of Pentecost. Prophets were common in the apostolic age. (11 : 27 ; 13 : 1 ; 21 : 4, 9-11 ; 1 Cor. 14 : 16.) Stephen and Philip were full of the Spirit and received special divine guidance. (6 : 3, 5, 15 ; 8 : 13, 26, 39.) Thus the Apostles and Christian leaders were inspired men, and we may regard their deeds and addresses, recorded in the Acts, as inspired. If it was important that they should be inspired in what they then did and said, it is equally, and even more important, that the record of their acts and addresses, intended for all ages, should be so inspired as to be free from error. Hence, we may reasonably infer its inspiration. 4. It seems evident that the writer of the Acts should be included among these leaders, though with the modesty of the Apostle John, in his Gospel, he only implies himself by the use of the first person. His companionship with Paul implies that he was a teacher, and Paul includes him among his fellow-workers. (Philem. 24.) That he should have written the third Gospel and this record of the apostolic churches, under such circumstances, puts him in the rank of a fellow-writer as well as fellow-worker. From the earliest historical references to him, it appears that, in his writings, he received the sanction of the Apostle Paul. All these are evidences of his inspiration. 5. He writes as one having the authority of the truth, and with an unaffected simplicity and impartiality which has no parallel in historical writings outside of the Holy Scriptures. 6. The Acts, also, in its facts and doctrines

is in harmony with the inspired Scriptures of the Old Testament, and with the writings of Peter, James, John, and Paul. 7. It appears to have been regarded by early Christians as a part of the Holy Scriptures, and was classed with the four Gospels to which it formed a sequel, and was read in the churches. 8. From these considerations and from a careful study of the Acts for many years, I have a settled conviction that it is the inspired word of God, intended, not merely for the early ages, but for all time.

PRACTICAL USES OF THE ACTS.

The uses of this book are manifold and can only be touched upon. Like the earth with its vast external and internal treasures from which scientists collect and classify, so the Acts presents a vast field from which the devout student of Scripture may gather and classify into doctrine and practice.

1. *Church organization and order.* The church is first seen in the upper room, the one hundred and twenty, in its preparatory and waiting condition. It receives its public divine recognition and its baptism in the Spirit on the day of Pentecost. It is later equipped with Deacons, and with Elders who were Overseers or Pastors. The Apostles appear as special officials of Jesus Christ, whose office from its nature and duties necessarily ceased with them. The Evangelists appear as missionary and traveling preachers without charge of local congregations. It also appears from the Acts that Christ is the Supreme Head of the church; that the Holy Spirit is among his people, working in and through them, for Christ and with Christ; and that the Holy Scriptures are the standard of appeal. The book also teaches regeneration before baptism, and a converted church membership; the restriction of the Lord's Supper to immersed believers; the self-governing local church; the total separation of church and state; and the absolute liberty of the individual conscience. See further on Church Polity in the Acts.

2. *Revivals of religion.* The presence and work of the Holy Spirit are emphasized throughout the Acts. (See on 1: 1, 5.) Seasons of refreshing are to come from the presence of the Lord. (See on 3: 19.) Revivals and consequent ingatherings are noted at Jerusalem, Samaria, Lydda, and Antioch; at Corinth and Ephesus. They were connected with prayer, turning to the Lord, and preaching the word.

3. *Missionary methods and work.* The Acts consists largely of missionary sketches, travels, and work. The two great centres of missionary activity were Jerusalem and Antioch, the one among Jews, the other among Gentiles. Thus the former represents home missions; the latter foreign missions. The Apostles and other missionaries generally went out two by two, as Peter and John (8: 15), Paul and Barnabas, etc. They generally began their operations at great centres of population an in-

fluence, as Jerusalem, Antioch, Corinth, and Ephesus, and from these centres worked out into the surrounding regions. Their method of evangelization was threefold: public preaching; private and personal conversation and appeals; and the written page as present in the Old Testament Scriptures and their own letters or written documents. They announced the glad tidings to unbelievers, and taught inquirers and converts. (15: 35; 28: 31.) Believers were baptized. (2: 41; 8: 12; 10: 47; 18: 8.) They emphasized the doctrines centering in the risen Lord, and the duties of repentance and faith, and shrank not from declaring the whole counsel of God. (20: 20, 27; 24: 25; 26: 22, 23.)

4. *Miracles and supernatural gifts.* These appear to be not so much noticed as the ordinary means. The gift of tongues is mentioned only at Pentecost, at the conversion of Cornelius and his company, and with the twelve at Ephesus, and is implied at Samaria. (8: 16-18.) So, also, but few miracles are described. These are the healing of the lame man in the temple, and Æneas, a palsied man at Lydda, and the raising of Dorcas at Joppa. The miracles of Paul were at Paphos, Lystra, Philippi, Troas, and Melita. Besides these, it is generally said that "many signs and wonders were wrought through the Apostles" (2: 43; 5: 12), that Stephen "wrought great wonders and signs" (6: 8), that signs and wonders were granted Paul at Iconium (14: 5), also at Ephesus. (19: 11.) In connection with these it should be noted that they spake with tongues "as the Spirit gave them utterance," that miracles were said to be "granted" or "wrought through" Peter, Paul, and others. Thus it appears that these gifts were not at the option or will of the Apostles, but were dependent upon the Spirit and his promptings. Accordingly, Paul asks: "Are all workers of miracles? Do all speak with tongues?" (1 Cor. 12: 29, 30.) Miracles and supernatural gifts seem to have had their place and design at the beginning of the Gospel Dispensation. But the same condition and necessities did not exist in after ages. Indeed, there are indications of their decline toward the end of the apostolic age. The later epistles of Paul, Peter, and John, make no mention of them, while emphasizing the ordinary means of the ministry, prayer, sanctification of the Spirit, and preaching the word.

5. *Messianic Predictions and Christ's Second Coming.* The Messianic and other predictions referred to in the Acts and the Gospels were not fully understood till after their fulfillment. Even our Lord's disciples and constant attendants had but dim perception of the Scriptures which spake of him. It was necessary that Jesus should breathe upon them, saying: "Receive ye the Holy Spirit," and that he should "open their mind that they might understand the Scriptures." Yet even then they seem to have had confused views of Christ's kingdom, and especially of his coming, when they ask: "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" The predictions which Peter quotes,

and explains so clearly and forcibly, were understood by him only after their fulfillment in Jesus, and after he was taught by him and the Spirit.

The same was true in regard to the gospel and the Gentiles. Prophets had foretold that its blessings would be enjoyed by the Gentiles, but the disciples utterly mistook the manner of its accomplishment. Neither the instructions of Jesus, nor the Spirit at Pentecost, had enlightened them on the subject. Peter must be taught by vision at Joppa and by actual occurrence at Caesarea.

May it not be so now with future fulfillment of prophecy? Much remains unfulfilled regarding the kingdom of God, the conversion of Israel, and the second coming of Christ. The spiritual and the discerning doubtless catch many glimpses of the mysterious future. But, reasoning from the past, can we be certain? Surely none have attained unto full knowledge. Must we not, like prophets and apostles, wait for the events themselves before we fully comprehend the intent and the meaning of the prophetic word? The experience of God's people in the past teaches us at least to be cautious and humble; ready to accept, even joyfully, whatever interpretations God's providences and the events themselves may surely indicate.

6. *A book of general education.* No other ancient book of its size is of such great educational value. In ecclesiastical history it fills a place which no other treatise could occupy. It is rich in its variety of places and character illustrative of the institutions of the Roman Empire, and of the influence and spread of the Greek language. Its geographical notices are most important, and its field for archaeological research is extensive. Classical antiquity and heathen mythology are both illustrated, and Greek philosophies and Oriental sorceries are brought vividly into view. Ancient literature has nowhere presented so lifelike and truthful a picture of Ephesus of Imperial times as that in the nineteenth chapter of the Acts, and no such account of seafaring life as that of Paul's voyage and shipwreck.

CHURCH POLITY IN THE ACTS.

This is of sufficient importance, to give a further separate notice of it. When Jesus said (Matt. 18: 17): "Tell it to the church," he had in view those local societies which were to be organized by the Apostles, under the guidance of the Spirit. And when he promised the Apostles that the Holy Spirit should teach them all things, and guide them into all the truth (John 14: 26; 16: 13), he included all that was necessary to Christian doctrine and practice. Throughout the book of the Acts it is implied and indicated that this guidance was granted them. Churches were organized, deacons chosen, elders and pastors appointed, and

persons were set apart, by the laying on of hands, to particular offices or work (6: 6; 14: 23; 13: 3), under the superintendence of inspired men. The Spirit commanded the Antioch church to set apart Paul and Barnabas for their mission (13: 2), and Paul speaks of the elders at Ephesus as having been made overseers by the Holy Spirit. (20: 28.) At first the church organization was in a formative state (1: 23; 6: 3 5), but soon it appears to have taken a permanent form. (13: 1; 14: 27; 15: 3, 22; 18: 27; 20: 17.) All this is confirmed in the Epistles. Peter would have the churches keep his instructions in remembrance. (2 Peter 1: 12-15.) Jude (ver. 3) exhorted them to contend earnestly for the faith delivered once for all to the saints. Paul received the gospel from Christ himself (Gal. 1: 12), and directed how to observe the Lord's Supper as he had received it from the Lord. (1 Cor. 11: 23.) He exhorts the Corinthians to be imitators of him, even as he also was of Christ, and said: "I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things and keep the ordinances," including, especially, the usages taught by him, "as I delivered them to you." (1 Cor. 11: 1, 2.) John indicates fully organized, independent, local churches, and also a completed revelation. (Rev. 1: 7; 22: 6, 7, 10, 18.) Thus it seems evident that a completed church organization was developed by the Apostles, under divine authority, during the period of the Acts.

The model as seen in the Acts, has the beauty and excellence of a divine simplicity. "Among others, its ministerial parity offers less temptation than any other to ministerial rivalries and jealousies, and a carnal ambition. Its elective franchise offers less opportunity than any other to a priestly lording over God's heritage. Its congregational form begets, more than any other, a sense of individual responsibility, an active interest in church matters, and the exercise of private judgment. Its cardinal principle of a converted church membership tends more than any other to maintain the purity of the church. Its independent form guards better than any other against schism. Indeed, when this independence is faithfully observed, there cannot be any schism to which a great confederated church is liable."—WILLIAM WILLIAMS, *Apostolical Church Polity*, p. 70.

CHRONOLOGY.

The date of our Lord's crucifixion could not have been later than A. D. 30, and appears to have been on April seventh of that year. The death of Agrippa Herod, at Cesarea (12: 23), occurred, according to Josephus, A. D. 44; and the recall of Felix and the coming of Festus, occurred A. D. 60. Taking these dates as starting points, in connection with other historical allusions, the chronology of the Acts may be approximately arranged, as in the following table. Compare, Author's *Harmonic Arrangement of the Acts*.

ARRANGEMENT OF THE ACTS.

A. D.	EVENTS.	ROMAN EMPERORS.
30.	The Ascension, May 18th.	Tiberius, A. D. 14-37.
	Pentecost, May 28th.	
31.	Martyrdom of Stephen.	
35.	Conversion of Saul.	Caligula, A. D. 37-41.
38.	Saul visits Jerusalem (9: 26).	
39.	Conversion of Cornelius.	
42.	Saul returns to Damascus (11: 26).	Claudius, A. D. 41-54.
44.	Martyrdom of James.	
41.	Saul again visits Jerusalem.	
45-48.	Paul's First Missionary Journey.	Nero, A. D. 54-68.
50.	The Conference at Jerusalem.	
51-54.	Paul's Second Missionary Journey.	
54-57.	Paul's Third Missionary Journey.	
58.	Paul's last visit to Jerusalem.	
58-60.	Paul's Imprisonment at Cesarea.	
60-61.	Paul at Melita (winter).	
61-63.	Paul's Imprisonment at Rome.	

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THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

Introduction ; our Lord's last words to his disciples, and his ascension.

I THE former treatise have I made, O **Theophilus**, of all that Jesus began both

2 to do and teach,^b until the day in which he was taken up, after that he,^c through the Holy Spirit,^d had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen.

^a Luke 1 : 1-4.

^b Mark 16 : 19 ; Luke 24 : 51.

^c John 20 : 22, 23.

^d ch. 10 : 41, 42 ; Matt.

28 : 19, 20.

TITLE. It is not claimed that the title is apostolic. The book, however, must have been very early designated by some name, even if at first it had none. Its most ancient title, according to the oldest manuscripts, was *Acts of Apostles*, which is both appropriate and truthful. It does not contain the acts of all the apostles, but simply the names of the eleven and their official act with the brethren in the first chapter, and certain life sketches of Peter, John, and Paul in the narrative that follows. It presents specimens of apostolic work, and certain acts of apostolic men.

Ch. 1 : The writer begins by referring to his former narrative ; speaks of our Lord's appearances and instructions during forty days and of his ascension ; records the names of the apostles, the number of their attendants, and their continuance in prayer ; and relates the circumstances of the election of Matthias in the place of Judas. This chapter is preliminary to the history that follows.

1-11. INTRODUCTION. OUR LORD'S INSTRUCTION TO HIS DISCIPLES AND HIS ASCENSION. (See Luke 1 : 1-4 ; 3 : 16 ; 24 : 50-53 ; 1 Cor. 15 : 3-8.) In the author's *Harmonic Arrangement* these and other passages are placed on the same page, so as to be easily compared.

1. The former treatise—Luke's Gospel, of which this was a continuation. This indicates that Luke was the writer of the Acts. **Theophilus**—

meaning *a lover of God*. Not a fictitious name, as some have supposed, a personification of Christian love, but a person of rank, probably a Gentile Christian. See author's note on Luke 1 : 3. Both Luke's Gospel and the Acts were intended for general circulation, and their dedication to a person of influence would naturally promote this object. **Of all that Jesus began**—a brief summary of Luke's Gospel. Notice, that in all that Jesus did he only *began*. The Gospel relates the beginnings ; the Acts takes up the record and relates how Jesus through the Holy Spirit continues the work. (See on ver. 5 ; also 10 : 36-45.)

2. Was taken up—an act of the Father. (Ver. 9, 11.) **Through the Holy Spirit.** Our Lord in his human nature was dependent on the Holy Spirit. He was anointed and filled with the Spirit. (Luke 4 : 1, 14, 18 ; John 3 : 34.) Thus under the influence and in the power of the Spirit he **had given commandments**, or rather commandment. Luke makes prominent the day of our Lord's ascension. Parting words and commissions are needful and especially prized. Some of these are recorded in ver. 4-8, which imply the last commission. (Matt. 28 : 18, 19.)

The apostles—"a title which accords well with all the contents of the book ; their *discipleship* was now over." (BENGEL.) Yet somewhat in the style of Luke, who in his Gospel six times applies the name apostles to the twelve. Matthew and Mark use the name but once each, while it appears thirty times

3 * To whom also he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. * And, being as-

sembled together with them, [he] commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father,^h which, saith he, ye have heard of me; ¹for John truly

* Mark 16 : 14; John 20 : 19, 20, 26; 21 : 1-14.
24 : 49; John 14 : 16, 17, 26; 15 : 26.

¹ Luke 24 : 44-48. * Luke 24 : 49. ^h Luke
ch. 11 : 16; Matt. 3 : 11.

in the Acts. They are no longer styled simply disciples.

3. To whom also—to his apostles. They were to be eye-witnesses of his resurrection. (Ver. 22.) **Showed himself**—literally, *presented himself alive*, talking, walking, and eating with them, giving them the clearest proof that he was with them in reality, in his own body, and not in appearance only. (See Luke 24 : 39, 43; John 20 : 27; 21 : 13.) **After his passion**—after he had suffered death. Ten appearances are recorded in the New Testament, seven of them to the apostles. (See author's *Harmony of the Gospels*, p. 312.) But these composed only a part of his many appearances from time to time during the forty days between his resurrection and ascension. **Many infallible proofs**. A very strong expression. The proofs were many and convincing, admitting not a shadow of doubt. **Being seen of them**—rather *appearing to them*. The proofs of his resurrection appealed to their sight, their touch, and their hearing. The fact that he taught and declared things pertaining to the kingdom of God, the Messiah's kingdom, was confirmatory of his actual living-presence among them; for this was the substance of his teaching before his sufferings. (Mark 1 : 15.) For examples of his teachings, see Luke, ch. 24, and John, ch. 21.

There is no discrepancy between Luke's account of the ascension in his Gospel and in the Acts. The latter is explanatory of the former, fuller and more minute. He does not limit, as some have asserted, the resurrection and ascension to a single day in his Gospel. After speaking of certain appearances he passes without note of time to the ascension, which he notices very briefly. It is in accordance with Luke's manner to exercise great brevity at certain points and pass rapidly over intervals of time. Thus between verses 17 and 18 of the ninth chapter of Luke

about three months must have intervened. (Luke 9 : 28.) In the same manner he rapidly closes his Gospel. In the beginning of the Acts the ascension was of the first importance, for the coming of the Holy Spirit was dependent on this (John 16 : 7), and Luke was about to relate the fulfilment of the promise of the Father. (Ver. 5.) Luke therefore repeats the account of the ascension with further details, and designates the time when it occurred. The one account is in perfect harmony with the other.

4. To the general description of our Lord's appearances is now added the account of two interviews with his disciples. The first is related in this verse and the next. **Being assembled together with them**—on some occasion during the forty days, with a purpose, it would seem, of seeing him and hearing more of the things pertaining to his kingdom. The Revised Version gives in the margin the reading, *eating with them*, adopted by several of the Greek Fathers and by Jerome. It has generally been regarded as an ancient explanation. It has but a weak manuscript support. Meyer, however, prefers it. **Not depart from Jerusalem**, etc.—reminding us of the same charge recorded in Luke 24 : 49, referred to in the words, **which ye have heard of me**. (See also John 15 : 26; 16 : 13.) Thus this meeting was probably not the same as that in Luke 24 : 49, but subsequent to it. **The promise of the Father**—voluntarily made, in the prophecies of the Old Testament (Joel 2 : 28-32; Isa. 44 : 3-5), repeated by John the Baptist (Matt. 3 : 11), and renewed by our Lord. They were to wait for its fulfilment.

5. Baptized—literally, *immersed*. This has been the meaning of the word in the original in every stage of the Greek language, and still its meaning in the modern Greek. **With** (rather, *in*) **water**. We have here what

baptized with water; ^kbut ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence.

6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time ^lrestore again the

7 kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, ^mIt is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father ⁿhath put in his own power. ^oBut ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you; and ^pye shall

^k ch. 2 : 1-4; Joel 3 : 28. ^l Gen. 49 : 10; Isa. 1 : 26; Dan. 7 : 27. ^m Deut. 29 : 29; Matt. 24 : 36; 1 Thess. 5 : 1, 2. ⁿ ch. 2 : 1, 4; Luke 24 : 49. ^o ch. 2 : 32; John 15 : 27.

scholars style the *local dative*, defining place. (See author's *Notes on Luke*, 3 : 16.) So, also, *in the Holy Spirit*, as the element of spiritual life. This was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, when they were pervaded, surrounded, and completely under the copious influences of the Holy Spirit. **Not many days hence**—a few, but how many not known; ten days, however, after the ascension. (Ver. 9 and 14.)

The promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Spirit, is one of the connecting links between the four Gospels and the Acts. (Matt. 3 : 11; Mark 1 : 8; Luke 3 : 16; John 16 : 7.) The prominence given to the Holy Spirit in this book should also be noted. He is more frequently spoken of than in the whole four Gospels, and in such a manner that the Acts has been beautifully and truly styled "the Gospel of the Holy Spirit." This could be illustrated throughout the whole book. It shows how the risen Christ carried on his work through the Spirit by his disciples. (See 2 : 4; 4 : 8; 6 : 3, 5; 8 : 39; 10 : 19, 45; 13 : 2, 9; 15 : 28; 16 : 6.)

6. When they were come together. Some regard this appearance as the same related in ver. 4. It is better to regard this as a different and later appearance. It accords also better with Luke 24 : 49, 50, where the promise of the Father and the command to tarry at Jerusalem seem to have been given before this last meeting, when he led them out to the confines of Bethany, on the Mount of Olives. **They asked**—unitedly, a question in which all were interested, which they may have feared to ask individually, and which might thus gain an easier and fuller reply. It related principally to time, *Wilt thou at this time?* His conversation had interested them in **the kingdom**. (Ver. 3.) But the promise that they should be soon baptized in the Spirit led them to con-

nect it with Christ's kingdom. While they had been greatly enlightened in regard to the necessity of Christ's death and resurrection and their work in the world (Luke 24 : 44-49), they still had some worldly views concerning the Messianic kingdom, expecting deliverance from Roman dominion, and a great central power at Jerusalem. Things did not then look very favorable. They were in doubt how soon this result might be brought about or how far it might be attained by the promised baptism. Hence the question, suggested by such passages as Isa. 9 : 7; Jer. 23 : 5, 6; 33 : 15, 17; Dan. 7 : 13, 14, 27.

7. The reply, like the question, relates chiefly to time. Jesus does not design to anticipate the illumination and guidance of the Spirit, and further revelations regarding the nature and designs of his kingdom. **It is not for you**—not your province or privilege. **The times or the seasons**. Omit the article. *Times or occasions*; of longer or shorter duration, general periods, or exact times. Our Lord's wise and tender answer implies that, though they had a right to ask, it was not their privilege to **know** the time. **The Father**—the background, as it were, of Deity, distinguished from the Son. (Matt. 24 : 36.) **Hath put in his own power**—*appointed by his own authority*, in the exercise of his sovereign will. Though the Son was no longer in humiliation, he guards the sovereign prerogatives of the Father.

8. **But** while you are not to know times and occasions, you will have a work and be qualified for it. Secret things belong to God, but things revealed to us. (Deut. 29 : 29.) **Receive power**—every needful qualification, including the working of miracles. (Mark 16 : 17, 18.) **After that the Holy Spirit**, etc.—pointing to the source of their power and the time of its reception. (2 : 24.) **Witnesses unto me**—

be witnesses unto me both ^p in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and ^q in Samaria, and ^r unto the uttermost part of the earth.

9 ^s And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

10 And while they looked steadfastly to-

ward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them ^t in white apparel; 11 which also said, ^u Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, ^x shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

^p ch. 3 : 26; 13 : 46. ^q ch. 8 : 5-25. ^r ch. 13 : 47; Matt. 24 : 14; Rom. 10 : 18. ^s Luke 24 : 51. ^t ch. 10 : 3, 30; Matt. 28 : 3; John 20 : 12. ^u ch. 2 : 7. ^x Dan. 7 : 13, 14; Zech. 14 : 4; Luke 21 : 27.

according to the oldest manuscripts, *My witnesses*; by words, deeds, sufferings, and blood. (John 15 : 27.) **In Jerusalem** (Luke 24 : 47, 48) . . . **all Judæa . . . Samaria . . . the uttermost part of the earth**—the beginning, progress, and extent of the work. The restriction of Matt. 10 : 5 is taken away. The narrative of the Acts follows this outline. (8 : 1, 5, 27; 11 : 18; 26 : 23; Rom. 15 : 18, 19.) The idea of the last commission is included here. (Matt. 28 : 19, 20; Mark 16 : 15, 16.) The full meaning was unfolded, as events demanded. They must have now understood from the explicit declarations and commands given them, that the gospel was to be extended to the Gentiles; but they mistook the terms and method. They expected to reach Gentiles through Judaism; that, first becoming proselytes, Gentiles would accept of the Messiah of Israel, and thus prophecy would be fulfilled. (Isa. 2 : 2; Mic. 4 : 1, 2; Amos 9 : 12.) A revelation was even needed to correct false views in Peter. (10 : 9-16.)

9. Had spoken these things and more. His last words were a blessing. (Luke 24 : 51.) **While they beheld.** Our Lord did not simply disappear as on other occasions (Luke 24 : 31), but was **taken** or *borne up* into the air and a **cloud** (symbol of the divine presence and glory) *took him away* from their sight. (See Matt. 17 : 5; Luke 9 : 34.) The ascension is thus presented in two parts, into the air and on the cloud from their sight into heaven. It appears that he ascended, not as a flash of lightning, but slowly with majesty, so that those who saw might be assured of the fact. (Mark 16 : 19; Luke 24 : 51.)

In regard to his resurrection and his ascension body, there has been much conjecture. When he ascended we may be assured that his body was glorified, such a body as the risen saints will have

at the last day. (1 Cor. 15 : 51-54.) But whether before his ascension he had simply a natural body such as were those of the widow's son and Lazarus, or a body gradually transforming into a spiritual body during the forty days, or an ethereal body, something between body and spirit, or the same body as before but endued with new powers, properties, and attributes, it is impossible to be assured. The last view, however, agrees best with the Lord's declaration (Luke 24 : 39), with his passing through closed doors (John 20 : 19, 26), and with his vanishing from sight (Luke 24 : 31.).

10. They looked steadfastly—were looking intently into heaven as he disappeared in the cloud. **Two men in white apparel**—angels, but in appearance like men. (See Mark 16 : 5; Luke 24 : 4.) Or possibly Moses and Elijah. (Luke 9 : 30.)

11. Men of Galilee—the apostles who were Galileans. **Why stand ye gazing up?**—in mingled surprise and sadness. It is useless thus to do. Jesus had repeatedly told them that he must ascend to the Father (John 6 : 62; 16 : 16, 28; 20 : 17); and the words of the angels appear like a gentle rebuke for their surprise and a solace for their grief, by assuring them of his return at some future time. It also would remind them of his farewell commands and promises, and their duty to return to Jerusalem, and wait to be endued with power from on high and prepared for their work. (Luke 24 : 49.) **So. . . in like manner**—visibly, in the air and on the clouds in his glorified humanity. (Rev. 1 : 7.) The second coming of Christ, unlike his first coming in obscurity and humiliation, will be in power and great glory, with his holy angels with him. (Matt. 24 : 30, 31; (1 Thess. 4 : 16; 2 Thess. 1 : 7, 8.)

12-26. RETURN OF THE APOSTLES TO JERUSALEM AND THE APPOINT-

12 ¶ Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey.
 13 And when they were come in, they went

up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and

¶ Luke 24 : 52.

MENT OF AN APOSTLE IN THE PLACE OF JUDAS. (See Matt. 10 : 2-5 ; 27 : 3, 10 ; Ps. 41 : 9, 69 : 25 ; 109 : 8.) The author's *Harmonic Arrangement* can be consulted here and throughout the book in comparing references, the divisions into sections being substantially the same in both volumes.

12. This and the next two verses form the transition between the first and last portions of this chapter. **Olivet** (meaning *olive-yard*) a long and high ridge east of Jerusalem, rising about two hundred feet above the highest point of the city. Olive trees still grow thereon, but less thickly than of old. The manner in which Luke speaks of it shows that Theophilus was not personally acquainted with the location ; literally, *from a mount, the one called Olivet*. His speaking of the distance, **from**, (rather, *near*) **Jernsalem, a sabbath day's journey**, indicates the same. This was a space of two thousand cubits, or about seven furlongs, supposed to be the distance between the ark and the tents, following tradition. (Josh. 3 : 4.) As it was a sabbath duty to go to the ark, this two thousand cubits was regarded as a lawful sabbath day's journey. Some infer that the ascension was on the sabbath. Possibly, but not necessarily, for the designation was a well-known and familiar one, and could have been applied to the distance on any day. This verse, however, shows that our Lord ascended from Olivet—tradition says the summit, but more probably in some retired spot over the slope toward Bethany. Luke in his Gospel (24 : 50) says : "He led them out as far as"—in the vicinity of—"Bethany," or, according to some of the oldest manuscripts, *toward or over against Bethany*. Yet Luke does not really give the distance of the place of the ascension, but of Olivet.

13. **Come in**—into the city. **An** (rather, *the*) **upper room**—the large, uppermost chamber under the flat roof, used for devotion and religious assem-

blies. (20 : 8 ; Dan. 6 : 10.) The definite article points to a well-known room, or one previously mentioned, and makes it probable that it was the "large upper room" where Jesus had celebrated his last passover. (Luke 22 : 12.) It was natural and fitting to retain this room and await the power from on high. (Luke 24 : 49.) It would not have been in the temple, for the disciples were not abiding there, nor would the Jewish rulers have allowed it, nor would such a place be likely styled the upper room. *Continually in the temple* (Luke 24 : 53) means merely that the disciples were present at all seasons or occasions for worship. **Abode**—that is, *where they*, the apostles, *were abiding*, perhaps their residence, but not necessarily, for it may have been the place where they spent most of their time in the services described below. There are four catalogues of the apostles in the New Testament. The other three are found in Matt. 10 : 2-4 ; Mark 3 : 16, and Luke 6 : 14. The order of names is slightly varied, but Peter is always first, Philip the fifth, and James the son of Alphaeus the ninth. The names of the eleven apostles are fittingly given here at the beginning of apostolic history, and just before the account of the election of a twelfth in place of Judas Iscariot. Further regarding these, see author's *Notes on Matthew*. (10 : 2-4.) All but Peter, James, and John appear here the last time in Scripture. **Simon Zelotes**—*Simon the Zealot*. From the times of the Maccabees there appears to have existed among the Jews a class called Zealots, who rigorously adhered to the Mosaic law, and probably received their name from the dying exhortation of Mattathias to his sons : "Be ye zealous for the law, and give your lives for the covenant of your fathers." (1 Macc. 2 : 49-51.) The later party arose about the time of the Roman census (A. D. 6), and was headed by Judas the Galilean. See on ch. 5 : 37. It is uncertain whether Judas was the brother or son of

^a Simon Zelotes, and ^a Judas the brother of
14 James. ^b These all continued with one
accord in prayer and supplication, with
^c the women, and Mary the mother of
Jesus, and with ^d his brethren.

*Appointment of an apostle in the place of
Judas.*

15 AND in those days Peter stood up in

the midst of the disciples, and said, (the
number of the names together were about
16 an hundred and twenty,) Men and brethren,
this Scripture must needs have been
fulfilled, ^e which the Holy Spirit by the
mouth of David ^f spake before concerning
Judas, ^g which was guide to them that
17 took Jesus. For ^b he was numbered with
us, and had obtained part of this minis-

^a Luke 6 : 15. ^f ^a Matt. 10 : 3; Jude 1. ^b ch. 2 : 1, 46. ^c Matt. 27 : 55, 56; Luke 24 : 10.
^d Matt. 13 : 55. ^e 2 Sam. 23 : 2. ^f Ps. 41 : 9; John 13 : 18. ^g Luke 22 : 47. ^b Matt.
10 : 4; Luke 6 : 16.

James. Probably the former, from
Jude 1.

14. These all continued, were
persevering, with one accord—one
word in the original, found frequently
in the Acts (2 : 1, 46; 2 : 24; 5 : 12; 8 : 6; 15 : 25),
and but once elsewhere in the New
Testament (Rom. 15 : 6), and denotes entire
harmony of views and feelings. **In prayer**—though not immediately
answered. This continued for about ten
days till Pentecost. (2 : 1.) **And sup-
plication**—not found in the best text.
With the women, with women; prob-
ably some of those who ministered to
Jesus in Galilee (Luke 8 : 2), and were at
the cross (John 19 : 25), and at the sepul-
chre (Mark 16 : 1), and others. **Mary.**
The last mention of her in the New
Testament. One tradition says that she
died at Jerusalem; another, that she
lived to an advanced age, and died in
John's home at Ephesus. **His brethren**—the younger brothers of Jesus
(Luke 2 : 7), who at first did not believe
on him (John 7 : 5), but now are united
with the disciples in obeying Christ's
command. This mention of them in
connection with Mary affords an argu-
ment that they were the brothers, not
cousins, of our Lord. See further dis-
cussions in Author's *Notes on Mark*,
6 : 3.

15. Here begins the account of the
election of a new Apostle. **In those
days**—the ten days between the as-
cension and Pentecost. **Peter stood
up.** He *arose*, implying a formal and
important act. Peter still takes the
lead (Luke 9 : 20; 22 : 32), but he never
claims or exercises authority over the
apostles, or independently of them.
(11 : 3, 4; 15 : 7; 1 Peter 5 : 1.) **Disciples—
brethren**, according to the highest criti-
cal authorities. **The number—the**

multitude, a promiscuous gathering of
apostles and brethren. **Names**—equiv-
alent to *men or persons*. The word
was used in taking a census, or mak-
ing an enrollment. (Rev. 3 : 4; 11 : 13.)
Together—meaning that they had
gathered together in this place and at
this time, making the whole number
one hundred and twenty. There was
great interest, and prayerfulness, and
expectancy. This in round numbers
may be regarded as the entire discip-
le-ship in Jerusalem. Many more were
in Galilee, where five hundred met the
Lord at one time. (1 Cor. 15 : 6.)

16. **Men, brethren.** A respectful
and formal address. Besides, all men
are not brethren, or fellow Christians.
Peter also addresses them as equals, not
as subordinates. **This Scripture**—
including the two quotations in verse 20.
Must needs have been fulfilled—
regarding Judas. The betrayal of Jesus
was according to the purpose of God,
but it did not lessen the guilt of the
betrayer, who acted freely. (Matt. 26 : 24;
27 : 4.) **Which the Holy Spirit . . .
spake.** David was inspired in writing
these psalms and the Holy Spirit as the
ultimate author spoke through him.
Who was guide, to them that *seized*
Jesus. Notice how mildly Peter refers
to the crime of Judas, perhaps painfully
recalling his own denial of his Lord,
whose intercession (Luke 22 : 32) only saved
him from fatal apostasy.

17. This verse gives a reason why
this prophecy which Peter had before
his mind (Ps. 109 : 7-5, 8), applied to Judas.
He had fulfilled its conditions, and had
held the office (ver. 20) to which another
must be elected. He was **numbered**
among the apostles and received **part**,
the allotment or the office of this minis-
try. But though he obtained this al-

18 try. ¹Now this man purchased a field with ^kthe reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. 19 (And it was known unto all the dwell-

ers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, Aceldama, that is to say, The field of blood.) 20 For it is written in the book of Psalms, 'Let his habitation be desolate, and let

¹ Matt. 27 : 3-10.

^k Matt. 26 : 15.

lotment among the twelve it was not his true place. (ver. 25.) He answered the conditions of the prophecy. (Ps. 109 : 25.) He had the deceitful mouth, the lying tongue, enmity without cause, and rewarded evil for good.

18. This verse and the next are regarded by most critics as an explanatory note of Luke, and not a part of Peter's address. Perhaps, but not necessarily; for Peter as an orator might remind them of his terrible end, so as to impress upon their minds more deeply the fulfillment of the divine threatening. **Purchased**—gave occasion for the purchase. Judas did not pay the money, but he furnished it, and with it the priests purchased a burial ground for strangers. This account is consistent with Matt. 27 : 3-10, in which we are told that Judas hanged himself. Matthew states how he came to his death; Peter describes the frightful condition in which his body was found. He probably hung himself to a tree overhanging the valley, and, the rope or limb breaking, he dashed upon the rocks below. "As I stood in the valley south of Jerusalem, and looked up to the rocky terraces which hang over it, I felt that the proposed explanation was entirely natural. . . . Trees still flourish quite near the edge of these rocks, and no doubt in former times were still more numerous in the same place. A rocky pavement exists, also, at the bottom of the ledges; and hence on that account, too, a person who should fall from above would be liable to be crushed and mangled, as well as killed. The traitor may have struck, in his fall, upon some pointed rock, which entered his body and caused 'his bowels to gush out.'" (DR. HACKETT, in *Illustrations of Scripture*, page 275.) **In the midst**—in the middle of his body. There is no intimation in the passage that he fell in the field which was purchased with his thirty pieces of silver. (Matt. 27 : 3.)

19. It was known—it became

known. **Inasmuch**—so that that field is called *Aceldama*. All this in rhetorical language would be perfectly natural in the mouth of Peter. **In their proper tongue . . . that is to say, The field of blood**—the words of Luke. Meyer well puts it when he says, that there "are two explanations inserted by Luke, the distinction between which and Peter's own words might be trusted to the reader." *Aceldama* is Aramaean, and Peter spoke in Aramaean, which was the language spoken by the Jews after the Babylonish Captivity; but Luke, writing in Greek, would naturally explain to his readers that the word meant 'the field of blood.' "If a French orator should allude to the original meaning of the word *Tuileries* in speaking of the famous palace, an English reporter of his speech could scarcely fail to add, 'which in French means a brick-kiln,' without dreaming that the reader would suppose these words to have been uttered." (DR. J. A. ALEXANDER.) **Aceldama**—the site is unknown. It is now pointed out south of Jerusalem, on the southern slope of the valley of Hinnon, near the eastern end of the valley. (See author's *Notes on Matthew*, 27 : 7.)

20. Peter returns to the fulfillment of Scripture spoken of in ver. 16. **For it is written**—appealing to Scripture as an authoritative standard. The first quotation is from Ps. 69 : 25, the second from Ps. 109 : 8. The first is quoted freely, with a change of **his** for **their**. The singular is included in the plural; besides, Judas was the pre-eminent human foe of Christ. Both of these predictions belong to that class of psalms in which David was a type of the Messiah and his enemies a type of the enemies of the Messiah. He utters his own deep experience, but, animated by the Holy Spirit, he unconsciously utters thoughts and words which would find their highest fulfillment in Christ and Judas. (See

no man dwell therein' and 'his bishopric 21 let another take.' Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in 22 and out among us,¹ beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained² to be a witness with us of his resurrection.

23 And they appointed two, Joseph called³ Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and 24 Matthias. And⁴ they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord,⁵ which knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these two 25 thou hast chosen, that he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that

¹ Matt. 3 : 13. ² ch. 4 : 33; John 15 : 27; 1 John 1 : 1-3. ³ ch. 15 : 22. ⁴ ch. 13 : 2, 3.
⁵ 1 Chron. 28 : 9; John 16 : 30; Rev. 2 : 23. ⁶ Matt. 25 : 41, 46; 26 : 24; John 17 : 12.

author's *Notes on Matthew*, 1 : 23.) **His bishopric**—his *overship*, or *office*. No argument can be drawn from this that the early church was governed by diocesan bishops. The apostles were certainly not such bishops. So DR. J. B. LIGHTFOOT on *The Christian Ministry*, Com. on the Philippians, pp. 195, 196.

21. Wherefore, according to prophecy, the place vacated by Judas must be filled. **Who have companied with us**—who had been attendants upon Jesus as the twelve had been. **Went in and out**—in private and public, during his official ministry. **His bishopric**—office, literally, *his overship*; his ministry and apostleship. (Ver. 25.)

22. Beginning . . . unto. From the time that John was baptizing to the ascension of Jesus. This is the time occupied by Mark in his Gospel. Some, if not all of the twelve, had been John's disciples and received his baptism. It is well to notice here that the baptism of John is one of the connecting links between the Acts and the Gospels. (10 : 37; 13 : 24; 18 : 25; 19 : 4.) **Ordained to be a witness of his resurrection.** The resurrection was the crowning act and evidence of the Messiahship of Jesus. "It proves him to be the Son of God, the Justifier and Redeemer of men, their Sovereign and Judge." (DR. HACKETT.) Hence this was the burden of apostolic preaching. (2 : 31-33; 3 : 15; 4 : 33; 4 : 37; 17 : 19, 31.) It was necessary that an apostle should be a witness to Christ's resurrection. The apostles then could have no successors. How Paul fulfilled this condition, see 1 Cor. 9 : 1; 15 : 8.

23. They—the whole company present. **Appointed**—they put forward two, recognizing in them the conditions

which Peter had just named. They had probably been, like the eleven, disciples of John, and early disciples of Jesus. **Barsabas**—son of Sabba, or Saba. **Justus**—his Roman name. It was very common for Jews to use a Gentile name among Gentiles. (13 : 9.) He is not to be confounded with Josias Barnabas (4 : 36) or with Judas Barsabas. (15 : 22.) **Matthias**—meaning *Gift of Jehorah*. Nothing more is known of these men. Doubtless they were prominent men, and may have belonged to the seventy. (Luke 10 : 1.) Why only two were nominated we can only surmise. Very likely they were the only two of those present, outside of the eleven, who fulfilled the conditions laid down by Peter in ver. 22.

24. Thou, Lord. To whom is this prayer addressed? Probably to the glorified Saviour; for he had chosen the other eleven (ver. 2), and Peter had just applied the name Lord to him (ver. 21), and a few years later he chose Saul of Tarsus as an apostle. (26 : 16-18; Gal. 1 : 1.) Prayers were also afterward addressed to Christ. (7 : 59, 60.) Peter also ascribes omniscience to Christ in John 21 : 17, "Lord, thou knowest all things." (See also John 2 : 24, 25.) **Knowest the hearts.** They could recognize the external qualifications, but the Lord alone could decide regarding the heart. **Whom thou hast chosen.** Neither the apostles nor the assembled disciples would assume to fill the vacancy. That was the Lord's work.

25. May take part. According to the best manuscripts, *May take the place*, the post, or position of this apostolic ministry which he should receive. **By transgression fell (away).** That he might go. The transgression by which Judas fell away from his

26 he might go to his own place. And ^rthey gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon

Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

^r Num. 26 : 55; Josh. 7 : 16; Prov. 16 : 33.

apostleship was the crowning act in his course of sin, deciding his doom. **His own place.** He was "the son of perdition" (John 17 : 12), and to perdition he must go. The only obvious and natural meaning is, that after committing his terrible deed of treachery and adding to it the sin of self murder, he went to his own place among the lost. All other explanations are weak or meaningless.

26. They gave forth their lots, rather, according to the best reading, *gave forth lots* for Barsabas and Matthias. Their names were probably written on slips of parchment, or tablets, and shaken together, and the first drawn decided the choice. The lot was religiously used under the Old Dispensation, and divinely directed. (Prov. 16 : 33.) It was used in detecting crime (Josh. 7 : 14; Jonah 1 : 7), in designating persons for office (1 Sam. 10 : 20, 21), in choosing men for an invading force (Judg. 20 : 9), in dividing the land among the tribes. (Josh. 18 : 10.) Peter and the assembled disciples were still under the shadow of the Old Dispensation. They used the lot, but after the descent of the Spirit on Pentecost the lot was no longer needed among believers. There is no instance of its use afterward in the New Testament. **He was numbered with**—a strong expression. He was enrolled among the eleven apostles, and henceforth was regarded as the twelfth. This alone ought to settle the question that no mistake was made in electing him. He was recognized as a complete substitute for Judas, with all the qualifications of the eleven. That this was so is evident from the fact that the apostles, after the death of Judas, are styled "the eleven" (Matt. 28 : 16; Mark 16 : 14; Luke 24 : 9, 33), but after this election "the twelve." (2 : 14; 6 : 2.) But Matthias is not heard of after this; so were not most of the apostles. But Jesus chose Paul afterward. Yes, as the apostle to the Gentiles, but he is never referred to as one of the twelve. As by the division of Joseph into two tribes there were thirteen tribes in

Israel, so perhaps we may see some analogy with the thirteen apostles.

THE KINGDOM, THE APOSTLES, THE CHURCH. In the four Gospels, *the kingdom of God* is spoken of as ever present, and pertaining to this world and the world to come. The *church* is mentioned only twice, and that by Matthew alone (16 : 18; 18 : 17), and regarded as future, though near at hand, and pertaining to this world. The kingdom is spiritual, having no earthly organization, and its subjects are the spiritual children of God. The church is the outward manifestation of the kingdom, and is made up of a converted and consecrated membership. This is its conception and ideal; yet practically, as it exists in this world, there is chaff with the wheat, and therefore it can only be said to be composed of professed believers.

The church may be regarded as having started on its mission on the day of Pentecost. That was the day of its manifestation to the world, and its divine recognition as an organization, and its consecration to its work. So far as we are informed in the Acts, the *apostles* were the only officials connected with it at first. Yet these were rather the officials of the kingdom, *the missionaries* (for such is the meaning of the word *apostles*) of Christ the Lord, the connecting link between the spiritual kingdom and the outward church, the representatives of Christ the King and Head, who were to organize the church. They had been chosen, endowed with spiritual gifts, and sent forth by Christ himself. Somewhat later the seventy had been sent forth on a brief and special mission (Luke 10 : 1), and nothing more is said of them. But the apostles had special endowments. They were inspired men, workers of miracles, witnesses of Christ's resurrection, and the organizers of the first Christian churches. As such, they officially stand alone. As the church could be originally organized but once, and as none of succeeding generations could be eye witnesses of Christ's resur-

rection, they could have no successors. Having performed their work, they were no longer needed. With them the office ceased.

PRACTICAL REMARKS.

1. One design of the Acts is individual instruction. (Ver. 1; Luke 1:3.)

2. As Christ did not discharge his official duties independent of the Holy Spirit, and as he still works among his people through the Spirit, so we should constantly seek the Spirit's guidance. (Ver. 2; 10:38; Heb. 9:14; John 14:26.)

3. The fundamental facts of Christianity rest on no uncertain basis. (Ver. 3; 1 Cor. 15:3-8.)

4. There are times for waiting, rather than working, but they should be seasons of prayerfulness. (Ver. 4; Lam. 3:25, 26.)

5. As the new-born disciple is to be baptized in water, so the new-born church is to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. (Ver. 5; 2:2.)

6. Erroneous opinions, especially of long standing, are hard to be overcome. (Ver. 6.)

7. By our not knowing times and seasons, God excites in us watchfulness, and gives opportunity for the exercise of human agency. (Ver. 7; 3:17, 18; Luke 12:35-37.)

8. Better than to know the future, is to do our part in spreading that kingdom which will be the glory of the eternal future. (Ver. 8; Ps. 2:7, 8; Ezek. 21:27; Dan. 4:3.)

9. The cloud of our Lord's ascension points forward to the clouds of his second coming. (Ver. 9; Matt. 24:30; 26:64; Rev. 1:7; Dan. 7:13.)

10. We may not gaze toward heaven after Jesus, but we should look up to him as our Intercessor, our Lord and Saviour. (Vers. 10; 11; 5:31; Heb. 7:25.)

11. Since Jesus died for us, and now intercedes for us on high, we should anticipate his coming with confidence and joy. (Ver. 11; Rev. 22:20.)

12. From the mount of blessing the disciple should return to the scene of his earthly duty. (Ver. 12; Luke 9:37.)

13. If we would enjoy times of great refreshing we must observe seasons of united prayer. (Ver. 13, 14; Ezek. 36:37.)

14. Mary was just as dependent as all others for salvation on the rich grace of God in Christ. (Ver. 14; Luke 1:47.)

15. Even the apostles did not transact busi-

ness pertaining to the church independent of the assembled discipleship (Ver. 15; 6:2; 15:22.)

16. The Scriptures must be fulfilled because they express the divine will. (Ver. 16; 2:22-25.)

17. Even Judas is a silent witness for Jesus. Having enjoyed opportunity of knowing his life, he could say nothing against him. (Ver. 17; Matt. 27:4.)

18. The price of wickedness often leaves its impress and monument in this world. (Ver. 18; 2 Peter 2:15, 16.)

19. The deeds and punishment of men who plot in secret will in due time be made manifest. (Ver. 19; 2 Tim. 3:9.)

20. Christ may for a time employ wicked men in important places. But how great will be their fall! (Ver. 20; Matt. 7:22, 23, 27.)

21. How terrible the results of avarice! Through it Judas becomes a traitor and Jesus is betrayed. (Ver. 18-20; Josh. 7:20, 21; 1 Tim. 6:10.)

22. How rich the experiences of companionship with Jesus! But in place of it we can enjoy his spiritual presence. (Ver. 21; Matt. 28:20.)

23. Apostles were for the first gospel age. They were missionaries for the introduction of Christianity and the full organization of the church (Ver. 21-23; Eph. 2:20; John 16:13.)

24. Jesus was an object of worship, hence divine. (Ver. 24; John 5:23; Heb. 1:6; Phil. 2:10, 11.)

25. All at last go to their own place—that for which their characters fit them and toward which are the inward tendencies of their natures. (Ver. 25; Rom. 2:7-9.)

26. It is an honor to be numbered among our Lord's ministers and be truly called by him. (Ver. 26; 1 Tim. 1:12; 3:1.)

Ch. 2: In this chapter Luke records the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the effect upon the foreign Jews who witnessed the gift of tongues; the address of Peter in which he points to the fulfillment of ancient prophecy and preaches to them Jesus, the risen Lord and Christ, who had sent forth the Spirit. Then follows the effect of Peter's discourse and the consequent addition of three thousand to the church; closing with a description of their stead-

The gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost; Peter's address, and its results.

2 AND when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord

2 in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house 3 where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as

* ch. 1 : 14.

* 1 Kings 19 : 11, 12.

u ch. 4 : 31.

fastness, social state, growth in popularity, and number.

1-13. DESCENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AT PENTECOST. (See Matt. 10 : 20; Mark 16 : 17.) Probably Sunday, May 28th, A. D. 30.

1. When the day of Pentecost was fully come—when the interval before the feast was completed and the day had arrived. *Pentecost*, meaning *fiftieth*, came to be used as a noun and was applied to the festival which occurred fifty days after the Passover sabbath. (Lev. 23 : 10-12.) It was also called *feast of weeks* (Deut. 16 : 10), because seven weeks from the Passover; and *the feast of harvest* (Exod. 23 : 16), and *the feast of first fruits* (Num. 28 : 26), because it was a feast of thanksgiving and the day for the offering the first fruits of the wheat harvest unto God. According to certain Jewish tradition, it also commemorated the giving of the law from Mount Sinai, which occurred on the fiftieth day after the departure of Israel from Egypt. It may be regarded as a striking coincidence that the organization of the Christian Church was divinely recognized on the anniversary of the giving of the law to Israel. (See note at the end of ch. 1.) On the manner of its observance, see Lev. 23 : 17-20.

The day of the week on which the coming of the Spirit occurred has been much discussed, many calculating the time in such a manner as to make this Pentecost fall on Saturday, the Jewish sabbath. But the earliest Christian traditions, and the Christian commemorations of the day, as far back as it can be traced, point uniformly to Sunday as the day. Pentecost occurred on "the morrow after the seventh sabbath" (Lev. 23 : 16), and if this was a weekly sabbath, then it must fall on Sunday. Or, as the fifty days were reckoned from the second day of the Passover, the 16th of Nisan, which in A. D. 30 came on Saturday, April 8, therefore Pentecost came on Sunday, May 28. (See further

discussion in author's *Harmonic Arrangement of the Acts*, pp. 149-153.)

This day was appropriate for the manifestation of the Spirit, because of the great number of native and foreign Jews who had assembled for worship. Thus perhaps a larger multitude witnessed the proof of our Lord's exaltation and glory than witnessed his deepest humiliation. **All**—all of the disciples in Jerusalem at that time (1 : 15.) **One accord.** (See 1 : 14.) **One place**—probably "the upper room." (1 : 13.)

2. Suddenly—without any previous intimation. The disciples were expecting the fulfillment of Christ's promise (1 : 4, 5, 8), but did not know how it would be fulfilled. **A sound from (out of) heaven**—indicating its heavenly origin as coming from God himself. **As of a rushing mighty wind**—the wind was a symbol of the Holy Spirit. (Ezek. 37 : 9; John 3 : 8; 20 : 22.) The coming of the Spirit was fittingly revealed to the ear by a wind-like sound. **It filled all the house**—the sound, symbolic of the presence of the all-pervading Spirit, filled all the house in which they were accustomed to assemble. (1 : 13.) "For as he, who sinks down in the waters and is baptized, and is surrounded on all sides by the waters, so also they were completely baptized by the Spirit." (Cyril of Jerusalem, *Instruction*, viii., on the Holy Spirit, ii., 14.) **Sitting**—in the morning (ver. 13); waiting and longing for the fulfillment of their Lord's promise.

3. Unto them—to all present. As the Spirit appeared in fitting visible form at the baptism of Jesus (Luke 3 : 22), so here to the assembled disciples. **Cloven tongues as of fire**—rather, *tongues distributing themselves among them as of fire, and it—a tongue—sat upon each of them*—the twelve, the brethren and the women. (1 : 14.) We may perhaps conceive of this manifestation as a tongue-shaped flame dividing so that a like flame sat on each,

of fire, ^zand it sat upon each of them.
4 And ^ythey were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began ^zto speak with other

tongues, ^aas the Spirit gave them utterance.

^{*} Matt. 3 : 11. ^y ch. 1 : 5 ; John 14 : 26. ^z ch. 10 : 46 ; 19 : 6 ; Mark 16 : 17. ^a Exod. 4 : 11, 12 ; Jer. 1 : 7-9 ; Micah 3 : 8 ; Matt. 10 : 19, 20.

Fire was a symbol of the divine presence (Exod. 3 : 2 ; 19 : 18 ; Ezek. 1 : 4 ; Rev. 1 : 14) ; and also of prophetic power. (Isa. 6 : 6, 7.) Here the tongues as of fire were also symbolical of the gift of tongues and the fiery zeal which attended the coming of the Spirit. This was needful to complete the baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire, foretold by John the Baptist. (See author's *Notes on Matthew*, 3 : 11 for a further discussion.)

4. Having described that which was external, Luke proceeds to the internal power from on high with which they were endued. (Luke 21 : 49.) **They were all**, including both sexes and various ages. (Ver. 17.) **Filled with the Holy Spirit.** The Spirit came, not in part or by measure, but in his fullness (John 3 : 34), pervading their whole being and imparting extraordinary powers in addition to his ordinary influence. (6 : 8 ; 10 : 44-46 ; 11 : 15, 16.) Under the Old Dispensation the Spirit of God was specially given to prophets, inspired leaders of the people, and certain skilled workmen (Exod. 31 : 2, 3 ; Deut. 34 : 9 ; Neh. 9 : 30 ; 2 Peter 1 : 21) ; and Elisabeth, Zachariah, and John the Baptist were filled with the Holy Spirit (Luke 1 : 15, 41, 67) ; but the influence was more or less occasional and transient. Under the New Dispensation the Holy Spirit has come to be permanently with God's people ; his abiding presence is the privilege of all believers. (Rom. 8 : 14 ; 1 Cor. 3 : 16 ; John 14 : 16, 17.) The Apostles had previously enjoyed the ordinary influences of the Spirit (John 20 : 22) ; and God's people in former ages had felt his influences on the heart (Ps. 51 : 10, 11 : Isa. 63 : 10), and men had resisted the Holy Spirit as his power attended the prophets and their teachings. (1 : 51.) But now the wish of Moses is fulfilled, that the Lord would put his Spirit upon all his people. (Num. 11 : 29.) **Began**—implying that this had never occurred before, and that it continued afterward. **Other tongues**—besides their own, and of course new to them. (Mark 16 : 17.)

Many attempts have vainly been made to explain away, or modify the greatness of this miracle. The language is decisive, and the narrative that follows shows that they actually spoke in different tongues. The miracle was not a change in the hearing of the multitude who assembled, for the use of other tongues preceded their coming together. (Ver. 6.) Nor did the disciples merely speak in the different dialects of the Greek language, for each of the multitude heard in his own native tongue. (Ver. 8.) Pentecost and its many tongues, reaching the representatives of the known world, stand opposed to Babel and its confusion of tongues. While this miracle was adapted to teach that the gospel was for all people, it was especially an evidence of the reality, power, and presence of the Holy Spirit among believers. It was also an attestation to the truth of the gospel, and to the character of the apostolic preachers as divinely authorized messengers. It was a sign to unbelievers (1 Cor. 14 : 22), and it ministered to the progress of the gospel on this occasion (ver. 12), and doubtless at many other times. Whether the apostles afterward used the endowment of tongues in preaching the gospel we are not informed. It was not really necessary within the Roman Empire, where the Greek language was in very general use. It seems to be unknown in modern times. Having served its purpose as an evidence of the reality and presence of the Holy Spirit and the truth of the gospel, it has passed away. The Spirit remains, but its miraculous manifestation is no longer needed. "While it is true that now the Holy Spirit does not confer the power of speaking in new languages, it is yet true that a baptism in the Holy Spirit does confer the power of new and other speech. When now a man has opened his heart for a baptism in the Holy Spirit ; when he begins to know, by secret and wonderful consciousness that that Spirit is

5 And there were dwelling at Jerusalem
Jews, devout men, out of every nation
6 under heaven. Now when this was noised
abroad, the multitude came together; and

[they] were confounded, because that
every man heard them speak in his own
7 language. And they were all amazed and
 marvelled, saying one to another, Behold,

in him; when the grand liberty of the sons of God has broken the shackles from his soul, then does he not begin to speak with new and other tongues, with the tongue of a deep personal experience, with the tongue of joy, with the tongue of victory? Surely, in this sense even the gift of tongues remains." (WAYLAND HOYT, D. D.) **As the Spirit gave them utterance**—to make address. They did not speak what they chose; neither did they simply recall what they had heard. Thus through the Spirit they were fully prepared to be witnesses of Jesus to all people. (1:8.) Further on the gift of tongues, see 10:46; 19:6; Mark 16:17; 1 Cor. 12:10, 28.

5. Dwelling—permanent residents, sojourners, and pilgrims. Some aged persons were spending their last days at Jerusalem; others, who were looking for the Messiah, wished to be at Jerusalem at the time of his coming; and others still had come to stop awhile and be at the feast. **Devout men**—God-fearing. The word is applied to Simeon (Luke 2:25), and to the men who buried Stephen. (8:2.) They were Jews and proselytes. (ver. 10.) The most pious of the scattered Jews would most naturally return to Jerusalem and be at the feast. They were thus competent and trustworthy witnesses of the power of the Spirit. **Out of every nation under heaven.** A strong popular expression meaning from many and distant lands. From the time of the Babylonish Captivity the Jews had become extensively dispersed, where they had come to speak the language of the people among whom they lived. They had, however, retained their faith, establishing everywhere their synagogues and their worship. They were very numerous in Alexandria in Egypt, at Antioch in Syria, at Ephesus and throughout Asia Minor. Many also were living at Corinth, Rome, and other distant cities throughout the Roman Empire. As the Greek language was generally diffused, the Septuagint, the Greek Version of the Old Testament,

was generally used by the dispersed Jews.

6. When this was noised abroad—literally, *this noise having occurred*, that is, when this sound was heard, referring to the noise of ver. 2. Some suppose it to mean the *rumor* of this whole phenomenon having spread abroad; but this does not agree well with the original Greek. Others suppose it to refer to the new tongues in which the disciples spoke so loud as to be heard throughout the neighborhood, perhaps the city. But this word is singular, a *voice* or *sound*, but the tongues were many, and those who adopt this view have to regard *voice* as a collective term. We regard the first view as the most natural. The loud sound from heaven, like the rushing noise of a mighty wind, was heard throughout the city, passing in its circuit or course toward the house where the disciples were congregated, and ending there, thus attracting the people to that spot. The house may have been situated on a thoroughfare, along which the people were going to the temple, or near an open space where the people could assemble, and where Peter and others addressed them. It is possible also that when the disciples began to speak with tongues, they went outside and continued to speak as the multitude came together. **Were confounded**—were confused and greatly perplexed in their minds. **Heard them speak**—not all in each language, but some in one and some in another. **In his own language.** *Own* is emphatic, his own particular tongue. (ver. 8.) The miracle was not in the ears of the hearers, but in the lips of the speakers.

7. All should be omitted according to the highest critical authorities. **Amazed and marvelled**—were filled with intense wonder, which they expressed in various ejaculations, amounting substantially to the exclamatory questions that follow. **To one another** is omitted in many of the oldest manuscripts. Alford explains it as "an explanatory gloss"

are not all these which speak ^b Galileans?
8 And how hear we every man in our own
9 tongue, wherein we were born; Parthi-

ans, and Medes, and Elamites, and the
dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judæa,
and ^c Cappadocia, in ^d Pontus, and Asia,

^b ch. 1: 11.

^c 1 Peter 1: 1.

^d ch. 18: 2.

added by some copyist. **Galileans.** They were all Jews of Palestine, but the apostles and leading persons were Galileans and the rest were supposed to be so. It was generally known at Jerusalem that Jesus and his disciples were principally from Galilee (Luke 23: 5-7; John 7: 41); and even strangers residing a short time at Jerusalem could not remain ignorant of the fact, when we consider the wonderful phenomenon attending our Lord's death and resurrection. Besides, Galileans would be quite easily recognized by travelling strangers, since Galilee had a mixed population, a peculiar dialect, and was a thoroughfare to travelers of various nations to the north and east.

8. And how—*how then*, since they are all Galileans, do we hear them speak our own languages? The sentence ends with ver. 11. Notice also how strong and accumulative the expression. Not only do they repeat **our own tongue** of ver. 6, but add **in which we were born**, our mother tongue. Thus it is evident that the disciples were not using unmeaning expressions in a state of ecstasy, but were speaking in foreign tongues which were understood by their hearers.

9. A list of names is given, following a geographical order of most of the countries in which the Jews were dispersed, beginning with the northeast and proceeding to the west and south. The persons described are Jews born in foreign countries or proselytes from heathenism to the Jewish faith. (Ver. 10.) This list agrees with Philo's survey of the Jewish dispersion. (*Legat. ad Caium*, 36.) The Jews outside of Palestine probably outnumbered the population of Palestine itself. **Parthians**—mentioned only here in the New Testament. Parthia was a somewhat ill-defined country in the extreme northeast and east, lying south of the Caspian Sea and east of Media. It became independent about B. C. 250, and was still powerful in New Testament times, and continued till A. D. 226. **Medes.**

Media lay midway between the south end of the Caspian and the head of the Persian Gulf. In the seventh century B. C. it was a great Oriental monarchy, but it fell into the hands of the Parthians in the second century B. C., and was subject to them at this time. **Elamites.** Elam was an ill-defined district east of the Tigris and south of Media. It was originally inhabited by the descendants of Shem (Gen. 10: 22), and appears to have been a province of Babylon in the days of Daniel. (Dan. 8: 1, 2.) Captives from Israel were located there. (Isa. 11: 11.) Sura or Shushan, its chief city, became the Persian capital, and Daniel, Esther, Mordecai, and many other Jews resided there. (Esther 4: 15, 16.) **Mesopotamia**, meaning *between the rivers*, was the plain country lying between the Tigris and the Euphrates, from whence Abraham was called and Balaam came. (Gen. 24: 10; Deut. 23: 4.) In New Testament times it belonged to the Parthians. Possibly converts from Pentecost carried back the gospel to their own country and founded the church in Babylon. (1 Peter 5: 13.) **Judea.** Why is Judea mentioned, as if it was strange that the disciples should speak in the language there? But they were enumerating the languages in which they heard the disciples speak, and the Aramæan of Judea was one of them. Besides, in passing from Mesopotamia to Asia Minor, Luke would naturally introduce Judea, which lay between them. The dialect of Galilee was also different from that of Judea, and native Jews must have composed a part of the audience. **Cappadocia**—the most easterly Roman province of Asia Minor, south of the Black Sea and west of Armenia. Its inhabitants seem to have been of Syrian origin, and Ptolemy places the cities of Iconium and Derbe within its limits, where the people used "the speech of Lycaonia." (14: 11.) Peter addressed his first epistle to Jewish Christians of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia,

10 *Phrygia, and †Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about ‡Cyrene, and †strangers of Rome, Jews and †prose- 11 lytes, †Cretes and †Arabians—we do hear

them speak in our tongues the wonderful 12 works of God? And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one 13 to another, What meaneth this? Others

* ch. 16 : 6 ; 18 : 23.

† ch. 13 : 13 ; 14 : 24.
43. ‡ Titus 1 : 5.

§ ch. 11 : 20.

‡ ch. 18 : 2.

‡ ch. 6 : 5 ; 13 :

1 Gal. 1 : 17.

Asia, and Bithynia, all provinces in Asia Minor. **Pontus**—north of Cappadocia, and having the Black Sea as its northern boundary. Large numbers of Jews dwelt there. (18 : 2 ; 1 Peter 1 : 1.) Its language seems to have been the Persian, with a mingling of the Greek. **Asia**—the Roman province of that name in Asia Minor, its limits varying from time to time, with Ephesus as its principal city. (6 : 9 ; Rom. 16 : 5 ; Rev. 1 : 4, 11.)

10. Phrygia occupied the western part of the table lands of Asia Minor. It was not a separate province, but belonged largely to the province of Asia. It is mentioned because it represented a distinct people and a different language or dialect. Its inhabitants emigrated from Armenia and were an Indo-Germanic race. Iconium of Lycaonia and Colosse of Asia were Phrygian towns, and Jews resided in them (14 : 1, 19 ; Col. 2 : 8-23), and the church in the latter place may have been founded by the Penteostal converts. **Pamphylia** was a Roman province on the south coast of Asia Minor, of which Perga was an important city, where there was probably a synagogue. (11 : 2.) **In Egypt.** Having given the principal provinces of Asia Minor, they cross the Mediterranean to Africa. Egypt became a Roman province in B. C. 30. Vast numbers of the Jews resided there, especially at Alexandria, where the Hebrew Scriptures were translated by the seventy into Greek about B. C. 280. **Libya.** All the then known portion of Africa outside of Egypt was called Libya, here applied especially to that region west of Egypt. One of its principal cities was **Cyrene**, a Greek colony and a seaport. It was nearly south of the west extremity of Crete. Many Jews resided there, and a synagogue of Cyrenians existed at Jerusalem. (6 : 9. See also ch. 11 : 19, 20.) It might be noted that the first Latin version of the Bible was made especially for North Africa. **Strangers of**

Rome—sojourners from Rome, who had come to reside temporarily at Jerusalem. Rome was the capital of the whole western world, situate on the Tiber, and having over two millions of inhabitants, including many Jews. Tiberius was then emperor. **Jews and proselytes**—referring to the entire class described, embracing Jews born in those countries and using their languages, and *proselytes*, Gentiles who had embraced the Jewish faith.

11. Passing toward the south we come to **Crete**, now Candia, a large island in the Mediterranean, south of the Ægean Sea. (27 : 8-13 ; Titus 1 : 5, 12.) **Arabians**—from Arabia Petrea, south of Palestine. This list of various peoples, each representing a language or dialect, is followed by the conclusion of the sentence, begun in ver. 8. The leading verb, **we do hear**, is repeated ; and that the miracle was not in their hearing, but in the actual utterances of the disciples, is further evident from their renewed declaration, **them speak in our tongues**. These tongues consisted of dialects of Aramaean, Arabic, Latin, Greek, and other native languages, fifteen mentioned above. As this was a general survey, it may not include all the languages and dialects spoken at that time. The theme of these utterances was **the wonderful (the majestic) works of God**, which he had done through Christ for the salvation of men. The disciples, filled and enlightened by the Holy Spirit break forth in praise¹ and thanksgiving to God for the gift of Christ and the glories of his salvation. They view the life, death, resurrection, and work of Christ as never before.

12. The more serious ones can find no satisfactory explanation. All are astonished and perplexed. They are convinced that there is something real in this. Assuming that it must mean something, they ask, **What meaneth this, What may this be?**

13. Others. The scoffing party,

mocking said, These men are full of new wine.

- 14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judæa, and all ye that dwell

at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, 15 and hearken to my words. For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, ¹⁵ seeing it is 16 but the third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet

¹⁵ 1 Thess. 5 : 7.

probably very largely natives of Jerusalem and Judæa, who, not understanding the foreign languages spoken, in their prejudices regarded the unknown tongues as so much babble and unintelligible jargon. **Mocking**—*deriding greatly, scoffing.* "The world begins with ridicule; thence it proceeds to questioning (4:7); to threats (4:17); to imprisonings (5:18); to stripes (5:40); to murder." (7:58.) (BENGEL.) **New wine**—rather, *sweet wine*. It was now the 28th of May (ver. 1); the first vintage occurred in August; it would not therefore have been new wine. Some regard it as the unfermented juice of the grape, which had been preserved in air-tight jars; and they suppose these deriders spoke in irony. But if they did not mean to charge these disciples with drunkenness, why did Peter reply, "These men are not drunken, *as ye suppose.*" And if he knew that the sweet wine would not intoxicate, why did he not tell them so? Peter evidently saw that they meant what they said. To their prejudiced minds the disciples doubtless appeared and sounded like drunken men. A sweet wine, very intoxicating, was made from grapes dried in the sun and soaked in old wine. To be *full* of such *sweet wine* was to be very drunk.

14-36. PETER'S ADDRESS TO THE MULTITUDE. (Joel 2 : 28-32; Ps. 16 : 8-11; ¹⁵9 : 3, 4; 110 : 1; Dan. 9 : 26; 1 Peter 1 : 10-12.) The three appellations applied to his hearers at the beginning of ver. 14, 22, and 29 divide his speech into three parts. In the *first*, Peter defends the disciples and explains the miracle; in the *second*, he proclaims Jesus as raised from the dead according to the prediction of David; and in the *third*, dwelling still further on David's prediction, he affirms that he and his brethren are witnesses of the resurrection of Jesus, who is proved thereby to be the true Messiah.

14. With the eleven—Peter being the twelfth. (1:26.) The apostles proba-

bly came forward from the company of believers, and Peter spoke in the name of all. As the multitude was very great the others may also have spoken to different companies of persons. **Ye men of Judæa**, etc.—Jewish men, and all inhabiting Jerusalem, permanently or temporarily. It does not appear that the disciples were now speaking in new tongues. That had been occurring in the hearing of the multitude. Now explanations are made of the wonderful miracle, and Christ is preached. Peter especially addresses the men of Judæa, and doubtless speaks in the Aramaean, the common language of the country. His *lifting up his voice* and the formal beginning of his address, indicate that he spoke loudly, distinctly, and solemnly. **Hearken**—to what may be unexpected and unwelcome.

15. Peter first of all denies the charge of drunkenness. **As ye suppose**—*as ye have taken up, or scoffingly assumed.* **But the third hour of the day**—between eight and nine o'clock in the morning, the first of the three stated hours of prayer. (See Ps. 55 : 17; Dan. 6 : 10, 13; ch. 3 : 1; 10 : 9.) The Jewish principle was well known, that no Jew should taste anything before this hour had expired on the Sabbath and other feast days. The supposition was unreasonable that there could be a drunken assembly at so early an hour, and that too on a feast day. Lowest revellers only would be drunken so early. (Isa. 5 : 11.) Observe the self-possession and calmness of Peter. He heeds not their mockery and insult, but prudently shows how groundless is their charge.

16. **But.** Passing by the charge of drunkenness as absurd and groundless, Peter proceeds to explain what the multitude had seen and heard. It is a fulfillment of prophecy spoken by God speaking *through the prophet* Joel. The passage (Joel 2 : 28-32) is quoted from the Hebrew with several varia-

17 Joel; 'And it shall come to pass' in the last days, saith God, 'I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old

men shall dream dreams. And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. And I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in

* Isa. 2: 2; Heb. 1: 2; 2 Peter 3: 3. * ch. 10: 45; Isa. 41: 3; Ezek. 11: 19; 36: 27; Zech. 12: 10. * ch. 21: 9. * 1 Cor. 12: 10, 28; 14: 1, etc.

tions, very nearly in the words of the Septuagint, or Greek Version. Some suppose, with considerable reason, that it formed a part of the Scriptural reading in the synagogues in the Pentecostal service. Joel prophesied about B. C. 800.

17. In the last days. In the Hebrew *afterward*. As *afterward* refers to the times of the Messiah, Peter uses the familiar prophetic phrase, "the last days," which was applied to the Messianic age. (Isa. 2: 2; Micah 4: 1; 2 Tim. 3: 1; Heb. 1: 2; James 5: 3; 2 Peter 3: 3; 1 John 2: 18; Jude 18.) **Saith God** is introduced very naturally by Peter at the beginning of the quotation. It is found a little before in Joel 2: 22, and also at the end of the quotation in ver. 32. **I will pour**, etc.—*pour forth of my Spirit*, signifying the abundance of gifts and influences. "Not in drops, as under the Old Covenant, but in streams." (Titus 3: 6.) The Hebrew in Joel has simply *my Spirit*, but here of my Spirit, showing that while the Spirit himself came forth abundantly, there was an exhaustless reserve with God. (Mal. 2: 15.) **All flesh**—all mankind. (Gen. 6: 12.) So that the Spirit can be resisted, grieved, quenched. (1: 51; Eph. 4: 30; 1 Thess. 5: 19.) Its power is to be enjoyed by both sexes, old and young, and in various conditions. **Prophecy**—meaning not merely the predicting future events, but also in general the uttering of religious truth under divine guidance. (1 Cor. 14: 1-3.) Notice that *daughters* and *handmaids* (next verse) are among those who should prophesy. The women enjoyed the gifts of the Spirit at Pentecost, and they have their work in the church. The manner in which they shall exercise their gifts must be decided by the word of God. (18: 26; 21: 9; Gal. 3: 28; Phil. 4: 3.) Peter places **young men** first, but Joel places **old men** first. Perhaps the apostles and most of the disciples were comparatively young men, and he

would make the fact prominent. **Visions**—an appearance seen in a waking, conscious state. **Dreams**—visions seen in sleep. "The visions correspond to the lively feelings of youth; dreams to the lesser excitability of *more advanced age*, yet the two are to be taken not as mutually exclusive." (MEYER.) For examples of visions, see 10: 10, 30; 16: 9; 18: 9. Dreams make up an inferior form of divine revelation, and are not mentioned in apostolic times. Joseph the husband of Mary was instructed and warned of God in dreams. (Matt. 1: 20; 2: 13, 19, 22.) Paul had "visions and revelations" (2 Cor. 12: 1); the latter may have included dreams. His vision of an angel by night in his shipwreck (27: 23) may have been in a dream. Dreams and visions in a dark age supplemented a deficient revelation. They are no longer needed by those enjoying the clear light of a completed revelation.

18. And—and even upon the lowest walks in life, male and female slaves. **My.** "Servants according to the flesh are meant, different from the children (ver. 17), but at the same time the servants of God." (BENGEL.) They should enjoy the gifts of the Spirit, not only of tongues, but also of prophecy. Among such the gospel early had many trophies. (1 Cor. 1: 26-28; Phil. 4: 22; Philem. 10-16.) Doubtless the fulfillment of this prophecy extends throughout "the last days," the Gospel Dispensation, yet the miraculous gifts appear to have been limited to the apostolic age.

19. "The last days" were to be noted, not only by the coming of the Spirit, but also by terrible visitations preceding the second coming of Christ. Prophecies of such dreadful events would arouse the fears of the multitude, and indicate what their doom would be if they rejected Christ. **And**—after the outpouring of the Spirit. The prediction finds its special fulfillment at the end of the dispensation, when Christ

the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and
20 vapour of smoke: [†] the sun shall be turned
into darkness, and the moon into blood,
before that great and notable day of the
21 Lord come. And it shall come to pass,

that ^s whosoever shall call on the name of
the Lord shall be saved [†]

22 Ye men of Israel, hear these words;
Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of
God among you ^t by miracles and wonders

[†] Mark 13 : 24; Luke 21 : 25.

^s Rom. 10 : 13.

^t Matt. 11 : 2-6; John 3 : 2; 6 : 14.

comes to judgment. (1 Thess. 4 : 15-17; 2 Thess. 4 : 7; 1 Cor. 15 : 52.) A typical fulfillment may doubtless be found in the destruction of Jerusalem. (Compare author's *Notes on Matthew*, ch. 24.) Similar language in Matt. 24 : 29, 30, Jesus used in regard to the time just preceding his second coming. Peter quotes the language, not knowing but that these terrible things might be near at hand, and under the power of the Spirit the people would feel that they were inevitable and close upon them. **Wonders in heaven . . . in the earth**—prodigies, terrific phenomena foretoking calamities and judgments. In explanation, and to make it more impressive by contrast, Peter adds, **above, signs, and beneath**. The wonders would be evidences of divine power and of Christ's coming. (Matt. 24 : 33.) They will consist in **blood and fire and vapor of smoke**, in supernatural bloody and fiery appearances and dense columns of smoke. Some take the language, symbolically, to mean wars, bloodshed, and conflagration. But since the day of the Lord and the coming of Christ are to be taken here literally, it seems best to take the language literally. Besides these are the signs and wonders, the miracles, preceding the great day of the Lord. Josephus speaks of some remarkable portents preceding the destruction of Jerusalem (*Jewish War*, vi., 5 : 3), and if such preceded the type we may naturally expect similar phenomena preceding the antitype, Christ's second coming.

20. **The sun . . . the moon**. The sun shall become dark, the heavens black, and the moon appear bloody. Compare the darkness of the crucifixion (Matt. 27 : 45) and in the plague of Egypt. (Exod. 10 : 22, 23.) **Great and notable day of the Lord**—great, decisive, and manifest before all the world (Rev. 6 : 15, 16), illustrious as a day of justice and of divine retribution.

21. The quotation closes with a cheer-

ing assurance and promise. *And it shall be*, in these times of the Spirit's presence up to that great day. **Whosoever shall call**—*shall have called* in repentance and faith. (Ver. 38, 44, 46, 47 : 16 : 31.) **Name of the Lord**—that is, of Christ. This is a strong proof of his divinity. (Rev. 22 : 9.) Compare the account of the dying thief in Luke 23 : 42, 43. **Shall be saved**—from the doom coming upon the wicked, and shall be permitted to share the joys and glories of his kingdom. Salvation has two sides : from sin and its consequences into holiness and its results. (Matt. 1 : 21; 24 : 46.)

22. Here begins a new division in Peter's address, and he uses an appellation again : **Men of Israel**, that is, Israelites. This is broader than "Men of Judea" (ver. 14), representing them as the representatives of the chosen people, the Israel of God. Jews were Israelites, and after the Babylonish captivity and in the New Testament, the two terms were generally synonymous. But in verse 14, "Men of Judea," while it might be taken by the audience as a general designation, would be of local application, especially to those Jews who had derided the disciples as drunken. (Ver. 13.) Having denied the charge of drunkenness as absurd, and explained the wonderful phenomena as the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy, Peter proceeds to preach Jesus to them as the Messiah, and in doing this he uses the honorable and conciliatory appellation, "Men of Israel." **Hear these words**. Calling special attention and giving emphasis to the unexpected truth he was about to utter, the proof of which was the miracle of tongues they had witnessed and the prophecy which was then being fulfilled. **Jesus of Nazareth**—rather, *the Nazarene* (Matt. 2 : 23) whom many of you knew and despised. **A man approved**—*proved to you from God*. No mere adventurer, but one whose authority from God was well attested by what he did. **Miracles**—regarded as the manifestation of divine

and signs, ^a which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: 23 him, ^z being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have 24 crucified and slain: ^y whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of

death: because ^z it was not possible that 25 he should be holden of it. For David speaketh concerning him, 'I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be 26 moved. Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also

^a Matt. 12 : 28. ^z Dan. 9 : 24-27; Luke 22 : 22; 24 : 44; 1 Peter 1 : 20. ^y ch. 4 : 10; 13 : 30, 34; Rom. 6 : 4; 1 Cor. 15 : 15; 2 Cor. 4 : 14; Gal. 1 : 1; Col. 2 : 12; 1 Peter 1 : 21. ^z John 1 : 4; 5 : 26; 10 : 18.

power. **Wonders**—extraordinary phenomena exciting astonishment or terror. **Signs**—evidences of his divine mission. (John 2 : 11.) See further on miracles in author's *Notes on Matthew*, ch. 8, introductory remarks. **Which God did by him.** Peter is speaking of "Jesus the Nazarene, a man," etc., the man Christ Jesus (1 Tim. 2 : 5; John 14 : 10), in the days of his humiliation. As Mediator he is subordinate to the Father. Peter also appeals to them as having witnessed these evidences, **as ye yourselves know.** The best authorities omit also.

23. Him being delivered up to you by Judas. Some refer this to the divine act of giving Christ over to the world to suffer. But this is not as natural and faithful to the original as the preceding view. **By the determinate counsel**—according to the fixed counsel. Not because Jesus was helpless, but because it was God's purpose. (4 : 28; Luke 22 : 22.) **And foreknowledge.** God's purposes and foreknowledge are harmonious and co-existent, and neither one independent of the other. (1 Peter 1 : 2, 20.) **Ye have taken** should be omitted according to the oldest and best manuscripts. **By wicked hands**, etc.—rather, *ye slew, having nailed him to the cross, by the hand of lawless men.* The death of Jesus was publicly demanded by the Jewish people, and judicially resolved upon and accomplished by the Sanhedrin in the name of the nation. (John 19 : 6-16; Luke 23 : 1, 21.) The instigators were the most guilty. Notice that Peter does not say, but implies, crucifixion, by stating a characteristic act in that cruel mode of putting to death, *having fastened*, that is, by nails to the cross. *The lawless ones* were Gentiles, Pilate, and the Roman soldiers. The trial of the Sanhedrin was in violation of their own law (Matt.

27 : 18, 24); and Pilate pronounced Jesus innocent, but, yielding to the infuriated cries of the Jews, delivered him to be crucified. (John 19 : 12-16.) The whole procedure was the act and the outcome of a lawless mob.

24. In contrast with their treatment *God raised him up from the dead.* (Ver. 32.) **Having loosed the pains of death**—having delivered him from the results of the pangs of death, that is from being held in the grave and from corruption. Many derive pains of death from the Septuagint rendering of Ps. 18 : 4; 116 : 3, where the Hebrew has "bands of death." Peter, perhaps almost unconsciously, used this familiar phrase. **Because it was not possible** that, contrary to God's purpose, Jesus should be held by death, as shown by the quotations which follow.

25. Peter quotes from Ps. 16 : 8-11, which indicated God's plans regarding the Messiah, that he must be raised from the dead. The quotation is from the Septuagint version. It is quoted by Paul (13 : 36), and by him also applied to Christ. The whole psalm is a unit, and Messianic. "We have in it but one speaker from commencement to end, and in other respects such a marked unity of thought and structure, that it would be an arbitrary procedure to assign one part to David and another to Christ." (HACKETT.) (See on ver. 30.) **Concerning him**—in reference to him, impersonating him. **I foresaw**—rather, *I saw the Lord before me always*, having reference not to time, but to place. **On my right hand**—as a protection and defence. **That I should not be moved** or disturbed in labors and sufferings. Constant fellowship with God gave assurance and stability.

26. **Therefore**—on account of this

27 my flesh shall rest in hope: because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance.^c

29 Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore^a being a prophet,^b and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of

^a ch. 1: 16.

^b Ps. 72; Luke 1: 31-33, 69; John 18: 36, 37.

confidence in his Divine Protector. **Heart**—the seat of the moral emotions and of the will. **My tongue**. In the Hebrew *my glory*, representing the *soul*, the noblest part and glory of man. The tongue was regarded as an instrument of praise and the glory of man, and thus the meaning in the Hebrew and the Greek is substantially the same. His spiritual being rejoiced and exulted. **Moreover also**—not this alone, but more. **My flesh**—my body, distinguished from the soul. **Shall rest**—literally, *shall tabernacle*, shall sojourn in the grave in hope, in security and confidence of a speedy restoration to life. His body in the grave shall be as one who pitches his tent for a short season.

27. **Because**—introducing the ground of the confidence expressed in the preceding verse. **Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell**—*thou wilt not abandon my soul in Hades*, the unseen world, the place of departed spirits. *Hell* here is not *Gehenna*, the abode of the lost (Matt. 5: 22), but *Hades*, corresponding to *Sheol* in the Hebrew, the world of departed spirits. Into this abode the soul of Christ entered, that portion of which, where he was, he himself called paradise. (Luke 23: 43.) Further discussion, see author's *Notes on Matthew*, ch. 11: 23 and *Notes on Luke*, ch. 23: 43. **Thine Holy one**. In the Hebrew thy *favoured* or *beloved*, meaning the Messiah. Here Christ's holiness is made prominent. (Heb. 7: 26.) **To see corruption**—experience dissolution, referring to his body, suffer putrefaction. He would not allow his body to decay and return to dust. The idea of extinction of being or annihilation is not in the word.

28. **Thou hast made, etc.** *Thou didst make known* those ways that lead to life, referring to Christ's resurrection. **Full of joy, etc.**—*full of gladness with thy presence*, in the presence of God, referring to Christ's ascen-

sion to heaven. To the same effect is the last clause of the Psalm, "Pleasures at thy right hand for evermore," which Peter omits as unnecessary and familiar, and easily supplied from memory. In the Hebrew there is but one verb in this verse, "Thou wilt show me the path of life, fullness of joy in thy presence," etc. (DR. CONANT, *Bible Union Ver.*)

29. **Men, brethren omitting and.** Peter had addressed them as Jews (ver. 14), as belonging to the chosen people of God (ver. 22), and now he uses the familiar, the conciliatory, and the more endearing appellation of *brethren*. This opens the third part of Peter's speech, though closely connected with the preceding. He applies the Scripture just quoted, first negatively in this verse, and positively to Christ in the next two verses. **Let me freely speak**. Rather, *I may be allowed to speak freely* and frankly without seeming to be lacking in respect for the patriarch David, the father and founder of the royal family. See 7: 8; Heb. 7: 4, where the same title is applied to the sons of Jacob, as the fathers of the tribes, and to Abraham the father of the nation. **Is both dead and buried**—rather, *he both died and was buried and his sepulchre is among us*, etc., in that part of the city known as the city of David or Mount Zion. (1 Kings 2: 10; Neh. 3: 16.) It was thus evident that David's prediction did not apply to himself. Josephus says that the tomb was opened successively, by Hyrcanus and King Herod, in order to rifle it of its supposed treasures. (*Antiq.* vii. 15. 3.) It was still known in the reign of Adrian and probably in the days of Jerome in the fourth century. The mosque covering the supposed site on the southern brow of Mount Zion is probably not far from the actual one.

30. **Therefore**, since David could not have meant himself, he must as a

the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on
 31 his throne; he, seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did
 32 see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, ^cwhereof we all are witnesses.

33 Therefore ^dbeing by the right hand of God exalted, and ^ehaving received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he ^fhath shed forth this, which ye now
 34 see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, ^g'The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou

^c ch. 1 : 8.

^d Eph. 1 : 20-23; Phil. 2 : 9.

^f ch. 10 : 45.

^e ch. 1 : 4; Luke 24 : 49; John 14 : 16, 26; 15 : 26.

^g Heb. 1 : 13; 12 : 2.

prophet have meant the Messiah. **Knowing that God had sworn with an oath.** The prophet Nathan had foretold this to David. (2 Sam. 7 : 12-16; 1 Chron. 17 : 17; Ps. 89 : 3, 4; 132 : 11.) The words, "according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ," are not in the oldest manuscripts and are omitted by the highest critical authorities. The promise implied an interrupted line of male descent from David to the *one* who *should sit on his throne*. The Jews held that the Messiah would descend from David, and Peter here makes prominent his kingly office, which he applies to Jesus. (Ver. 36.)

31. Seeing this before—David as a prophet knew and *foresaw this* through the promises and revelations from God. It need not be understood that David had a full knowledge of this, but that he had caught prophetic glimpses. (1 Peter 1 : 10-12.) **Christ**—rather, *the Christ*, not a proper name, but the official title, referring to Jesus, whom he mentions in the next verse. Peter refers to the prediction again, and applies it to the Christ, as foreseen by David. **His soul** is omitted by the best critical authorities. Instead, read *he*, that is, the Christ who was not left in a disembodied state, and whose flesh, though he died, was not corrupted.

32. This Jesus—whom Peter had introduced in ver. 22, and whose resurrection he affirmed in ver. 24. Only one thing now was needed to complete Peter's argument—the proof of Jesus' resurrection. This he now gives: **whereof we are all witnesses**, consisting of the apostles who were specially chosen to testify to that event (1 : 8, 22) and many others. (1 Cor. 15 : 6.) **Whereof**—of which fact, his resurrection.

33. Therefore—in consequence of his resurrection, of which his exaltation was a necessary result. *By* or *to*

the right hand. Either is grammatically and theologically correct. He was exalted by God's power and to God's right hand. (1 Peter 3 : 22; Eph. 1 : 20-22.) The latter rendering is preferable, being more in accord with the next two verses and the parallel passage. (5 : 31. See Col. 3 : 1; Heb. 1 : 3; 10 : 12.) **Having received of the Father the promise**, etc.—the bestowment of the Holy Spirit in fulfillment of the promise of the Father (1 : 4), made in such passages as Joel 2 : 28-32, quoted by Peter, ver. 17 f. **He, Jesus, hath shed forth** just now. Jesus had promised that he would do this. (John 15 : 26; 16 : 7.) **See and hear.** The phenomena connected with the coming of the Holy Spirit were both seen and heard. (Ver. 7, 8, 11.) The whole company engaged in praising God, and all speaking in unknown tongues.

34, 35. For, in proof of the statement that Jesus had ascended to the right hand of God, Peter adduces the prediction of David himself, found in Ps. 110 : 1. This Psalm was regarded as messianic, and was so recognized by Christ himself. (Matt. 22 : 41-46.) The argument is: David did not ascend into heaven, but he called him who is to ascend *my Lord*, thus distinguishing him from himself. David's Lord was Christ who was thus to be exalted. **The Lord said**, etc. In the Hebrew, *Jehovah said to my Lord*, that is, to the Messiah, as Peter's hearers would readily acknowledge, according to the common interpretation of the Jews. **Sit thou on my right hand**—not merely as a position of honor, but as a partner of my sovereignty and power. **Till I make**, etc.—*till I make thy foes the footstool of my feet*, implying utter defeat and abject submission. The figure is borrowed from the usage of ancient warfare. (Josh. 10 : 24; 2 Sam. 22 : 41.) (See author's *Notes on Matthew* 22 : 43,

35 on my right hand, ^h until I make thy foes
36 thy footstool. [Psa. cx. 1, *Sept.*] There-
fore let all the house of Israel know as-
suredly, that God hath made that same
Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord
and Christ

37 Now when they heard *this*, ⁱ they were
pricked in their heart, and said unto
Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men
and brethren, ^k what shall we do?

38 Then Peter said unto them, ^l Repent,
and ^m be baptized every one of you ⁿ in

^h Eph. 1: 22. ⁱ Zech. 12: 10; John 16: 8, 9.
Luke 24: 47. ^m ch. 22: 16; Matt. 28: 19.

^k ch. 9: 5, 6; Luke 3: 10. ^l ch. 3: 19;
ⁿ Rom. 6: 3.

44.) It is as Mediator that Christ is spoken of as at the right hand of God. (Rom. 8: 34; Eph. 1: 20-23; 1 Cor. 15: 23-28.)

36. Therefore . . . assuredly—an emphatic conclusion from which there could be no appeal. **Be it known**—from all the evidence adduced. Concisely and impressively, Peter sums up his discourse in a single sentence. **God . . . ye.** A strong contrast. **God hath made**—*hath divinely constituted him both Lord and Christ.* (ver. 21, 31.) Jesus is brought to view, as in the preceding verse in his Mediatorial character. The end of the sentence and of the discourse in the original is very pointed—*this Jesus whom ye crucified.* It was fitted to produce conviction in his hearers, as individuals and representatives of the Jewish nation, for having disowned and crucified the Messiah. “The sting at the end.” (BENGEL.)

This discourse of Peter is one of great force and beauty. It is a model as a simple presentation of the truth. It is founded on the word of God and applied to those facts which were known to the hearers, and to other facts attested by the apostles and their brethren from their personal knowledge. It was evidenced by prophecy, miracles, and the presence of the Holy Spirit, and eminently suited to produce conviction and a sense of sin. “The apostle demands of the house of Israel that they acknowledge him, who a few weeks before was crucified, as their Lord and Christ. *And they believe!* A stronger proof cannot well be imagined than this, that it was the power of the Holy Spirit which made the words of the preacher move the hearts of the hearers! To all Jews the cross of Christ was a stumbling-block, yet they recognize, on the word of a private individual, the crucified and deeply abased Jesus as their Saviour.”

37-47. THE EFFECT OF PETER’S

ADDRESS. Conviction, conversion, and baptism. Steadfastness, benevolence, joy, and daily increase of discipleship.

37. They were pricked—*pierced to the heart*—with pungent sorrow and alarm by the truth that they had rejected and crucified the Messiah. **They**—not necessarily all the multitude, but large numbers of them. This effect upon them shows the Holy Spirit’s power in producing conviction (John 16: 8), as well as in the gift of tongues. **Men, brethren**—the same appellation that Peter used (ver. 29), showing, not merely a return of the compliment, but a mellowing of their hearts. **What shall we do?** We have put the Messiah to death and have incurred the most dreadful guilt; we cannot undo the deed: what shall we do to enjoy the divine favor and escape the consequences of our great folly and guilt. Their conversion began with this anxious inquiry.

38. Repent. The word expresses an inward change of views and feelings, implies a sorrow for sin and a reformation of life as the fruits. (See Matt. 3: 2, note.) **Be baptized**—literally *immersed*. (See Matt. 3: 6, note.) Baptism follows repentance, and is a symbol of the thorough change denoted and implied by repentance. **Every one of you.** Baptism is a personal act which must be intelligently received by each candidate. **In**—rather, *upon*—**the name of Jesus Christ**, as the only Saviour, and relying upon him, accepting all that his name implies. Their baptism was to be received in faith, and by it they professed their faith in Jesus Christ. Compare our Lord’s early preaching in Galilee, “Repent and believe the gospel,” here to be performed both in act and symbol. (Mark 1: 15, note.) **For**—rather, *unto*—**the remission of sins**, as the beneficent end of repentance and faith in the Lord

the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, * and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the

40 Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, 'Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

* ch. 8 : 15-17.

p Gen. 12 : 1-3;

17 : 7, 8; Jer.

32 : 39, 40.

† Isa. 41 : 3; Joel 2 : 28.

‡ ch.

10 : 45; Zech. 6 : 15;

Eph. 2 : 13-22.

§ Heb. 3 : 1;

2 Peter 1 : 10.

¶ 2 Cor. 6 : 17.

Jesus Christ, as closely united to and expressed in their baptism. Repentance and its first fruits, obedience, are inseparable; and hence though forgiveness of sins is promised on repentance and faith (3 : 19; 8 : 22; 10 : 43; 11 : 18; 13 : 39; 16 : 31; Rom. 3 : 26), yet as Christ had commanded baptism, by which they should profess their repentance and faith in him, there would have been wanting sufficient evidence of their inward change and outward reformation, if this precept were not obeyed. "And in the circumstances of that day a willingness to be baptized was no slight evidence of a new heart." (Dr. HOVEY, in Dr. HACKETT's *Commentary, the Acts*.) (See Mark 16 : 17, note, and Remark 17.) The sins forgiven included not only that of crucifying the Messiah, but all other sins. In addition, the gift of the Holy Spirit is promised, whose wondrous power they saw and felt. They should enjoy, not only the ordinary sanctifying power of the Spirit, but the extraordinary gifts which were displayed on that occasion and enjoyed by the apostles and other disciples. (10 : 45; 11 : 17.) Water baptism is enjoined; partaking in the Spirit's baptism promised.

39. For introduces the explanation or reason for what he had just stated. **The promise**—of the Spirit referred to in the preceding verse and verses 17, 18. (See 1 : 4; Eph. 1 : 13.) **Unto you**—emphatic, to you Jews (14), Israelites (22), both native and foreign (8-11). **To your children** may mean either children (21 : 5), or descendants (13 : 33), the latter agreeing better with the context, which is far-reaching. The promise is to such as are capable of exercising repentance (ver. 38), and who may see visions and prophesy (ver. 17). **To all that are afar off**—not to the foreign Jews, for they are included in *unto you* (above), but to the Gentiles who were regarded as *afar off*. (Eph. 2 : 11, 13, 17; Isa. 49 : 1; 57 : 19; Zech. 6 : 15.) Some object,

that Peter was not aware that the gospel was to be preached to the Gentiles. (11 : 18.) But pious Jews expected that the reign of the Messiah would be universal. Prophets had foretold the conversion of the Gentiles (Gen. 49 : 10; Ps. 2 : 8; 72 : 11; Isa. 45 : 22; 60 : 3, 11, 16; 62 : 2; 66 : 19; Dan. 7 : 14); and Christ had included Gentiles in his last commands. (Matt. 28 : 19; Mark 16 : 15; Luke 24 : 47.) Peter and the rest expected through Judaism, to reach Gentiles who would become Jewish proselytes before being admitted to full gospel privileges. (See 1 : 8, note.)

As many as the Lord our God shall call—shall have called by the invitations both of the Old Testament and of the gospel message. Others translate with the Revised Version, *shall call unto himself*, by the preaching of the gospel. While effectual calling by the Spirit is taught in other passages (Rom. 8 : 30; Eph. 4 : 4; 2 Tim. 1 : 9), it does not seem to be distinctively referred to here. The invitations of the gospel are attended with promises (3 : 19; Rev. 22 : 17), which become effectual in those who believe. It was within the divine purpose that there should be general calls of the gospel and effectual calls of the Spirit in individual hearts, and that the promises should be held up before all those to whom these invitations came. It should be noted that this is a free quotation from Joel 2 : 32, or it may have been suggested by that passage.

40. With many other words. From this it appears that we have only the substance of what Peter said. The character of the preaching is indicated by the two words **testify** and **exhort**. The first expresses argument and witness for the truth, illustrated in ver. 14 and 36; the second relates the practical part, urging to immediate acceptance, illustrated in ver. 38, 39, and by the solemn advice that follows. **Save yourselves, or be ye saved**—in separating yourselves by repentance, and evidencing your faith in

41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there

were ^u added *unto them* about three thousand souls.

^u ch. 5 : 14.

Christ by baptism. Either the middle or passive sense is allowable here, and in harmony with other Scripture. (Ezek. 33 : 11; 1 Tim. 4 : 16; Eph. 2 : 8, 9; Titus 3 : 5.) **From this untoward, crooked or perverse generation**—from their evil and contaminating influence and from their guilt and doom. (2 Cor. 6 : 17; Phil. 2 : 15; Deut. 32 : 5.)

41. Then—therefore. They—referring to the penitents mentioned in ver. 37. **Gladly**, expresses a true idea, but is a later addition, and is omitted in the oldest and best manuscripts. **Received the word**—*having received* the gospel message. It seems from this verse and ver. 37 that the larger part of the multitude accepted the testimony of the apostles and acted upon their exhortation. **Were baptized**—immediately following repentance and acceptance of Jesus Christ as a Saviour. If this clause is joined closely to *that day* in the next clause, according to some editors, then the natural inference is that about three thousand were baptized some time during the day. But if, with other editors, the two clauses are separated by a colon, then the baptisms could have occurred at such times and places as were most convenient to all concerned. There need be, however, no hesitancy in accepting the view that the whole number were baptized on that day. For there were a large number of administrators—the twelve apostles, many of the seventy, and others whom the apostles could invite to assist. Jerusalem was also abundantly supplied with water, and the rite of immersion could be administered in many places, public and private. The city was almost encompassed by a circle of artificial lakes. The lower and upper Pools of Gihon, in the Valley of Hinnom, were two large reservoirs, the former about six hundred feet by two hundred and fifty, the latter about two-thirds this size. The Pool of Bethesda was three hundred and sixty feet by one hundred and thirty. There were also the Pool of

Hezekiah and the Pool of Siloam, besides other public and private pools, the ruins of which in part remain. There was, therefore, “much water,” and the customs of the East would not forbid or hinder such a use. The awe that came upon the people (ver. 43) restrained any opposition. **Added unto them**—*unto them* is an addition of the translators, to fill out what they supposed to be the sense. Others would supply *the church*, as in ver. 47. *Were added*, however, is absolute; no words need be supplied. The meaning is that about three thousand were added to the company of disciples. **Souls**—persons, according to the usage of the Hebrew and many other languages.

This verse may be said to close the account of Pentecost. Peter is the leader and spokesman, though doubtless others did their part by word and deed. It is interesting to compare Peter with himself. In his Pentecostal discourse he quotes the prophecy, “Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved” (ver. 21) presents Jesus as “both Lord and Christ,” and promises “the gift of the Holy Spirit.” A little later he presents him as “the Prince of Life” (3 : 15), and declares, “neither is there salvation in any other” (4 : 12), and later still he holds him up as “a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel and the forgiveness of sins.” Thirty or more years after this, Peter, with ripe experience, writes his first epistle, in style resembling his speeches, the same fire and energy, somewhat tempered by age. He refers to “the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven”; to having been “begotten unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ”; to the death of Christ as a fulfillment of prophecy; to “salvation,” a favorite word, the object and result of faith; and to a risen Saviour, the object of love, the source of joy, and the ground of faith and hope. (1 Peter 1 : 3-10.)

42. The following verses, to the end of the chapter, describe the condition of the church immediately after Pente-

Benevolence, joy, and increase of disciples.

42 AND they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and ³ in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And

^{*} Luke 22 : 19; 1 Cor. 10 : 16.

³ ch. 5 : 12; Mark 16 : 17.

² ch. 4 : 32, 34; 2 Cor. 8 : 14, 15;

9 : 6-15.

⁴ ch. 4 : 34-37.

cost. How long a time this account covers is not indicated, but probably a few months of peaceful growth between the day of Pentecost and the Feast of Tabernacles. **They**—the young converts. **Continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine**—*perseveringly attending upon the teaching of the apostles*, sought their instruction regarding Christ and their new faith. **Fellowship**—a second item. The word in the original means a *sharing* in common, and may be applied to social or spiritual *fellowship*, to *distribution* of charities, or to mutual *participation* of goods. Later than this it was applied to *communion*, as of the Lord's Supper, but not here. The Lord's Supper seems to be indicated by the next phrase. The word seems to denote some act connected with worship, as do the three other items mentioned. To translate *fellowship* is too general, for there is fellowship in all acts of social worship, in prayer, praise, contributions, and in the Lord's Supper. It is, therefore, best to render *the distribution*, underlying which, of course, would be the feeling of brotherhood and fellowship in sharing the necessities of needy brethren. It was a *fraternal* distribution of goods. This sense of the word is confirmed by Rom. 15 : 26; 2 Cor. 9 : 13, where it means a *contribution*, and by Heb. 13 : 26, where it has the kindred idea, *to communicate*. **Breaking of bread.** The Jews began a meal by giving thanks and breaking a loaf. (27 : 35; Luke 24 : 35.) The phrase here has a religious setting with the three other acts, and can hardly mean merely a common meal. As the breaking of bread was the leading feature of the Lord's Supper, it came to denote the ordinance itself. (20 : 7, 11; 1 Cor. 10 : 16.) As the institution of the ordinance followed the Paschal Supper (Luke 22 : 14, 19), so doubtless it often followed the ordinary meal. (Ver. 46; 1 Cor. 11 : 20-22.) **The prayers**—not merely

fear came upon every soul. And ² many wonders and signs were done by the 44 apostles. And all that believed were to- 45 gether, and ³ had all things common; and ⁴ sold their possessions and goods, and

individual prayer, but the service of prayer and various kinds of prayer at their religious gatherings.

43. This verse describes the impression made upon those outside of the discipleship by the wonderful events of Pentecost, and the miracles wrought through the apostles. **Fear**—religious awe and reverence. **Every soul**—every one who witnessed or heard of the gift of tongues and the conversion of the multitude. The miracles wrought through the apostles are described as **wonders** and **signs**. (See ver. 22.) Thus God wrought *through* them for their preservation (4 : 30; 15 : 12), and for permitting the development of the church life.

44. The social condition of the discipleship is described in this verse and the next. **All that believed**—in Jesus as the Christ. One of the names early given to them was believers. (5 : 14.) **Were together**—daily in the temple, and in their private gatherings. Many of the three thousand were pilgrims, and, after receiving needed instructions, returned to their homes, and by so many lessened the number of believers at Jerusalem. This helps to relieve the difficulty of their assembling often in one place, as well as daily in the temple. **Had all things in common**—regarding their possessions, not as their own, but as a trust for the benefit of those that had need. (4 : 32.) Their supreme love to Christ, their consecration of their all to him, and the needs of converted pilgrims while remaining at Jerusalem and of poor converts, led those believers, who had property, to share with them in daily sustenance.

45. What they did in carrying out this beneficent purpose is now related. They sold their property, real and personal. **Possessions**—property acquired; some regard the word as referring to houses and lands. **Goods**—that which belongs to any one; regarded by

^bparted them to all *men*, as every man 46 had need. And they, continuing daily

with one accord ^cin the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did

^b Prov. 11 : 24, 25; Isa. 58 : 7; 1 John 3 : 17.

^c ch. 5 : 42; Luke 24 : 53.

some as movable possessions, personal property. **Parted them**—the proceeds of sales, **to all**—not to all men, but to all of the discipleship *as any one had need*. Thus the sales and the distribution were regulated by the individual necessities of the disciples.

From this passage, and from 4 : 32-37 : 6 : 1, it is evident: (1) That there was a *community of goods* in the church at Jerusalem. It was the carrying out the command (Luke 12 : 33), in reference to the whole church, and the continuation and enlargement of the plan, pursued by Jesus and the twelve, by which their expenses were defrayed from a common purse. (2) While it was entered into by all it was carried on by the *voluntary principal*. No one was compelled to sell; and after the sale it was left free to give little or much. (5 : 4.) Thus Mary the mother of Mark owned a house several years later. (12 : 12.) There was no breaking up of the family relation. (Ver. 46.) (3) It was *confined to the church at Jerusalem*. There is no trace of it found elsewhere, in any of the early churches, but on the contrary there is evidence that it did not exist in them, and that the rich and poor lived side by side. (2 Cor. 8 : 13, 15; 9 : 6, 7; 1 Tim. 6 : 8, 17-19; James 2 : 1-5; 4 : 13.) It was a temporary expedient adapted to Jerusalem, where the apostles and other devoted disciples continued to reside, and where many of the pilgrims coming to the feast, would be converted, and afterward might continue for a time for instruction, and perhaps for residence. So doubtless many devout Jews, who were spending their last days in the Holy City, believed in Jesus, and needed help from their brethren. Doubtless, the large liberality displayed by the Jerusalem discipleship helps to explain their general poverty somewhat later. (Rom. 15 : 26.)

We are not, however, to regard it as a mistake, but a wise expedient for the time and place, and an eminent exhibition of zeal, consecration, and beneficence. Not only were the early disciples looking for the coming of their

Lord, but they were living in that city which, by their Lord's own prediction, had been devoted to terrible judgments and utter destruction. Why then should they amass property there? What better than to use their possessions in Christ's service while the city still remained? The apostles and the brethren made no mistake in devoting to beneficence things which might be destroyed or desolated, and thus entirely lost to the good of Christ's kingdom. And we may believe that they were guided by the Spirit. The same conditions prevailed nowhere else, and hence no other church adopted the plan.

46. Their habits and religious spirit. *Continuing, persevering day by day with one mind*. On the meaning of the phrase, see 1 : 14. **In the temple**—at the appointed hours of prayer. (3 : 1.) Their daily presence would show that they were not opposed to the law, and that they entered heartily into the public worship of God. It gave them opportunity also to bear witness to Jesus, and instruct inquirers. (3 : 11-25; 5 : 21.) It appears that for a considerable time they continued to observe the Mosaic laws and worship (21 : 20), and also the rites of the new faith. The Old Dispensation strictly ended with the death of Christ, yet it was not at once outwardly supplanted by the New. The services of the temple and of the synagogue gave the very best opportunity for disseminating the doctrines of Jesus. The transition from the Old into the New was made without that violent shock which would otherwise have been experienced. Compare how the ministry of the Baptist and the ministry of Christ overlapped. (John 3 : 22, 23.) Jewish believers were gradually prepared for entering upon the full liberty of the gospel. In contrast to their public worship in the temple were their private gatherings, **breaking bread**, observing the Lord's Supper (see on ver. 42.) **from house to house**, rather, *at home or in private*. Either translation is allowable, though the

eat their meat with gladness and ^d singleness of heart, praising God, and ^e having favour with all the people. And ^f the

Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

^d Matt. 6 : 22; Rom. 12 : 8, Gr.; 2 Cor. 1 : 12; Col. 3 : 22. ^e Rom. 14 : 18. ^f ch. 5 : 14; 11 : 24.

latter is preferable. Both, however, contain truth. They met in private in different places, doubtless going from house to house. The expression does not necessarily mean that they all met in one place; nor that the Lord's Supper was observed daily. **Did eat their meat**—their ordinary meals. **With gladness**—with joyous exultation; the result of their faith, the fruit of the Spirit. **Singleness**—simplicity of heart toward God and one another, without deceit, jealousy, or envy on the part of any.

47. Closely connected with what precedes, the writer adds, **praising God**, not merely giving thanks at meals, but at all times and everywhere praising and glorifying God. **Having favor with**, receiving the general approbation of **all the people**—of all classes. This does not probably include the Jewish leaders (4: 1), who were awed into comparative silence by the wonderful events of the resurrection (Matt. 28 : 11-15) and of Pentecost. **The Lord**—Christ the Head of the church **added**, through the Spirit and the preaching of the truth. (16: 14.) **To the church**. This is omitted by the oldest manuscripts and versions. Some suppose that it was omitted by copyists to make it conform to ver. 41. The meaning, however, is substantially the same, whether it is said the Lord added to the church, to them, or to himself. The high critical authorities that make this omission join to this verse **together** from the beginning of the next chapter, translating *the Lord added together daily*, that is, *added to them*, through the Holy Spirit and in fellowship, one with another. On the word *church*, see note on 5: 11. **Such as should be saved**—rather, *the saved ones*. Those who believed were regarded as already saved, having obtained acceptance with God through Christ, and were spoken of as “delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son.” (Col. 1: 13.)

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH is generally referred to the day of Pentecost. Perhaps it would be more correct to say that it was then publicly and divinely recognized. During the forty days before our Lord's ascension he appears, not only to have taught the disciples the things of the kingdom, but also to have treated them as a missionary body for proclaiming the gospel throughout the world. (Matt. 28 : 16-20; Mark 16 : 15-18; Luke 24 : 48, 49.) And immediately after his ascension they continued together in worship and transacted business as an organized company. (1 : 14, 15, 23-26.)

The young church, however, received its baptism and was manifested to the world on Pentecost, and then began to fulfill its mission. It did not, however, at once recognize the greatness of its work, nor its relation to Judaism and the world. Instead of comprehending that Christianity was to supersede Judaism, the early disciples appear to have thought that it was merely to supplement it by faith in Jesus as the Messiah. Their attachment to the Mosaic law was, therefore, unabated, and they worshiped in the temple like other Jews. But in addition they held their own meetings in private houses and convenient places, as believers in Jesus, for the breaking of bread and other religious observances.

They were consequently slow in extending the gospel outside of Jerusalem and in organizing churches elsewhere. Jesus had ministered to the entire discipleship of Palestine, and why might not they do the same. So for a long time the church at Jerusalem seems to have been the only church embracing believers in all parts of Palestine. (9: 31.) At the same time these believers would hold their religious assemblies where they lived (9: 32), which might sometimes be very naturally called their synagogue, and is so styled in James 2: 2. Other local churches did not probably exist much before the conversion of Cornelius, perhaps not

till after that event. It was about that time when, according to Gal. 1:22, churches appear to have existed in Judea.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE CHURCH.—From this chapter it appears that the Jerusalem church consisted of persons who professed conversion, and who were first baptized as believers in Jesus as the Christ. And this seems to have been the uniform case with this and all other churches mentioned in the Acts. (8:12, 38; 9:18; 10:48; 16:15, 33, 40.) This practice is also confirmed throughout the epistles. The churches and their members are addressed as "saints," followers of the Lord," "faithful brethren," "the children of God," "sanctified in Christ Jesus," "the elect of God and such as love the Lord," and are "new creatures in Christ Jesus." (1 Cor. 1:1, 2; Eph. 1:1.) Everywhere it is implied that only such were members as were capable of personal devotion to Christ and faith in him. (5:14; 9:35; 11:21, 24, 26.)

PRACTICAL REMARKS.

1. It is fitting that God's people should be together with one mind on days appointed for religious service. (Ver. 1; 20:7; Heb. 10:25.)

2. They usually receive the most signal blessings, who assemble and are waiting in united prayer. (Ver. 1, 2; 4:31; 12:12, Matt. 18:19.)

3. The special influences of the Holy Spirit is the privilege of the individual believer. (Ver. 3; 1 John 2:20.)

4. When the heart is filled with the Spirit the tongue will be unloosed to witness for Christ and speak his praise. (Ver. 4; 4:8, 31; 6:10.)

5. God prepares a way for his coming and hearts to receive him. (Ver. 5; Luke 1:17.)

6. The outpouring of the Spirit will always be noised abroad, and call the people together. (Ver. 6; 8:18; 3:10.)

7. The displays of divine grace will always excite the wonder of those who know not its power. (Ver. 7, 8; 3:10; 8:18.)

8. God often uses the humblest instrumentalities to accomplish his work. The fishermen of Galilee, whose speech was somewhat uncouth, are the leaders in the Pentecostal

work. (Ver. 7, 8; 1 Cor. 1:26, 27; 2 Cor. 4:7.)

9. The grandeur of Christ's work through the Holy Spirit is too great for any one language of earth to describe. (Ver. 9-11; 1 Cor. 2:9, 10.)

10. The Pentecostal tongues foreshadow the preaching of the gospel in all tongues and among all nations. (Ver. 9-11; Matt. 28:19; Rev. 14:6, 7.)

11. The works of God had been sung at creation (Job 38:7), but new strains of wonderful works of grace were added at Pentecost, to be continued and perfected in the kingdom of glory. (Ver. 11; Rev. 5:9-13.)

12. Revivals of religion call out honest inquirers and profane deriders. (Ver. 12, 13; 13:7-12, 41, 42, 45, 48.)

13. Many are skeptics, not for want of evidences to the truth of religion, but for a want of disposition to investigate. (Ver. 13; 17:32; John 5:40.)

14. The Gospel appeals to our reason and commends itself to the judgment. (Ver. 14, 15; Isa. 1:18; 1 Peter 3:15, 16.)

15. We should answer opposers and slanderers of God's work with calmness, kindness, and self-possession. (Ver. 14, 15; Prov. 15:1; 1 Peter 2:15.)

16. The Old Testament is the word of God and the prophets were inspired to write what they did. (Ver. 16; 2 Peter 1:21; 2 Tim. 3:16.)

17. Scripture is often interpreted by Scripture. From its interpretations of prophecy we may learn much how to interpret those predictions which are yet unfulfilled. (Ver. 17-21; 2 Peter 1:19, 20; 1 Peter 1:10-12.)

18. Revivals of religion are a part of the Spirit's work in the world. All the objections, which are made against them, might have been urged against the Pentecostal season. (17-21.)

19. The Spirit gives all believers something to do; but to each his own work and gift. (Ver. 17, 18; 1 Cor. 12:4-9.)

20. In preaching the gospel its warnings and threatenings, as well as its invitations and promises, should be used. (Ver. 19, 20; Rom. 2:4; 11:21, 22; 2 Cor. 5:11.)

21. How easy to be saved! How plain and simple the way! Salvation is to be had for the asking. (Ver. 21; Isa. 45:22; 55:7; Luke 23:42.)

22. Even in his humiliation Jesus gave

abundant proof that he was the Christ, the Saviour of the world. (Ver. 22; 10 : 38; John 3 : 2; 15 : 24.)

23. The purposes of God are in harmony with the free agency of man. Men act freely in accomplishing what God has determined to bring to pass, and hence may be very guilty. (Ver. 23; 4 : 27, 28; Gen. 50 : 20.)

24. As death could not hold the Prince of life, so it shall not be able to hold the bodies of his saints at the last trump. (Ver. 24; 1 Cor. 15 : 52; 1 Thess 4 : 16.)

25. The prophecies of the Old Testament centre in Jesus. David was both the type of Christ, and he spake of Christ. (Ver. 25-28; Rev. 19 : 10.)

26. Jesus approached death with the full expectation of overcoming it, and rising from the grave. (Ver. 25-28; Luke 18 : 33; Heb. 12 : 2.)

27. Conflicts add to the joy of the victor, and to the glory of his crown. (Ver. 25-28; 2 Tim. 4 : 6-8.)

28. The example of Jesus should stimulate us to look to him and overcome, and share with him in his glory. (Ver. 28; 2 Tim. 2 : 12; Rev. 3 : 21.)

29. The death and burial of David, and the death and resurrection of Christ are equally facts of history. (Ver. 29-32.)

30. Death puts an end to earthly glory; but Christ's glory and the Christian's glory are beyond death and the grave. (Ver. 30, 31; Phil. 2 : 9; 1 Cor. 15 : 55, 56.)

31. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the triune God, are engaged in the great work of redemption. (Ver. 33; John 15 : 1, 26.)

32. David's Lord will reign supreme over all his foes. (Ver. 34, 35; Eph. 1 : 20; Heb. 1 : 13.)

33. The presence of the Holy Spirit is an evidence of a crucified, risen, and exalted Jesus. (Ver. 33, 36; 1 Peter 1 : 12.)

34. In Peter's sermon, we have a model of gospel preaching. Scriptural, simple, direct, embarrassed by no metaphysical or abstruse teaching, it sought immediate results, conviction of sin and conversion to Christ. It was an argument from facts and the word of God, adapted to convince his hearers that they had rejected their Messiah, the Saviour. (Ver. 14-26.)

35. Gospel truth may convince the intellect, but the Holy Spirit must take it to the heart. The word of God becomes the sword of the Spirit. (Ver. 37; Heb. 4 : 12.)

36. Conviction of sin is essential to repentance, but is not repentance. Peter exhorts his convicted hearers to repent. (Ver. 38; John 16 : 9-11.)

37. "Baptism is the divinely appointed method of making an open confession of repentance and faith. It draws the lines between the professed friends of Christ and his enemies. It is the only act which the believer in Jesus is required to perform but once." (PENDLETON.) (Ver. 38; Gal. 3 : 27.)

38. How full and free the gospel message! How it should stimulate believers to send it speedily to all nations! (Ver. 39; Rev. 22 : 17.)

39. It is the duty of sinners to yield and be saved from eternal ruin, by repenting of their sins, believing on Christ, and confessing him before men. (Ver. 40; 3 : 19.)

40. The glad reception of the word, followed by prompt obedience, is an evidence of true repentance. (Ver. 41; 1 Thess. 1 : 4-6.)

41. Repentance, faith, and baptism are but the beginnings of the Christian life. Studying the word; private, social, and public worship; and benevolence enter into the warp and woof of holy living. (Ver. 42; 1 Cor. 15 : 58; 1 Thess. 5 : 14-22.)

42. The Lord's Supper never came before baptism, but always after it, in apostolic churches, (Ver. 42; 20 : 7; 1 Cor. 11 : 18-22.)

43. Great seriousness and solemnity is generally the result of an extensive work of grace in a community. (Ver. 43; 18 : 8-11; 19 : 10.)

44. While a community of goods did not exist in any other church than that at Jerusalem, and it is not practicable nor desirable among professing Christians generally, yet the spirit of brotherly love and sympathy underlying it is no less a duty now than it was then. The opposite spirit is of the world and not of Christ. (Ver. 45, 46; 1 John 3 : 17; James 2 : 15; 5 : 1-6.)

45. Religion brings joy to the private and public worship, to family and social life, to the body and the soul. (Ver. 46, 47; 8 : 8.)

46. Consistent Christian living will command the respect of men. (Ver. 47; 27 : 43.)

47. A spiritually minded church, earnest in the cause of Christ, and united in love and effort, will continually increase in numbers from those who are saved. (Ver. 47; 11 : 21, 24, 26.)

Healing of a lame man; Peter's address to the people.

3 NOW Peter and John went up together

into the temple at the hour of prayer,
2 ^g *being* the ninth hour. And ^h a certain
man lame from his mother's womb was
carried, whom they laid daily at the gate

^g Dan. 9 : 21.

^h ch. 14 : 8.

Ch. 3 : In this chapter and the next Luke records the first opposition and persecution endured by the first church. Christianity was not to be national or local, but universal. Pressure from without and an impelling force within were needful to scatter the disciples and send them forth to preach the word and plant churches elsewhere. The minor hostilities recorded till the general persecution upon the death of Stephen, were the providential steps to a wider dissemination of the gospel. Luke records the miraculous healing of a lame man by Peter and John, which astonishes the spectators, and calls forth an address from Peter, in which he ascribes the miracle to the power of Jesus, and urges the people to repentance.

1-11. **HEALING OF THE LAME MAN BY PETER AND JOHN.** This was one of many miracles (2 : 43), given because it was the occasion of another telling discourse of Peter, and of the first hostile movement against the church. The time is not stated, but a break is implied in the peaceful growth following Pentecost. Some place it a year later; others think the feast of Pentecost had not yet ended, because of the number of priests present in the temple. (4 : 1.) The latter view gives too little time for the development of church life recorded in 2 : 42-47, and the former allows more than is necessary. It is better to put it between four and five months later, at the Feast of Tabernacles, which occurred early in October, A. D. 34.

1. Peter and John. Leaders among the apostles, as well as close personal friends. Their mutual friendship may be traced in their history. They were partners in fishing (Luke 5 : 10), went together to prepare the last Passover (Luke 22 : 8), were together at the trial of Jesus (John 18 : 15, 16), at the sepulchre, and at the Sea of Galilee after the resurrection. (John 20 : 2 : 21 : 7, 21.) They were among the more intimate com-

panions of our Lord. (Luke 9 : 28.) **Went up**—*were going up*. True to life; the temple was on Mount Moriah, and they were on their way, when they reached the gate Beautiful. (Ver. 2.) **Together** should be connected with the last verse of the preceding chapter, according to high critical authorities. (See 2 : 47.) **At the hour of prayer, the ninth hour**—about three o'clock in the afternoon, being also the hour of evening sacrifice. There were three hours of prayer, 9 A. M., noon, and 3 P. M. (Ps. 55 : 17; Dan. 6 : 10.) The apostles were going up to the temple to worship. They did not fully understand the relation of the gospel to the Mosaic law nor enter into the full meaning of Christ's teaching concerning spiritual worship, and that time and place were unimportant. (John 4 : 21-24.) "From the Jewish synagogues, on the contrary, they must have separated at once, as soon as their distinctive views became known. It was impossible to avow the Christian faith and remain connected with those communities." (HACKETT.) (See on 2 : 46.) They had assemblies of their own. (2 : 42, 46.)

2. The miracle here related was one of the wonders and signs wrought by the apostles. (2 : 43.) It was by no means the first, but probably the most remarkable up to that time. Its importance was enhanced by the publicity given and the results which followed. The man upon whom the miracle was performed had been **lame** from his birth, and he was now over forty years old (4 : 22), and was laid **daily** at the gate of the temple. He was thus well known; his lameness was of the most serious nature; there could be no doubt about the miracle. **Was carried**—just at the time when Peter and John arrived. **Whom they laid**—*whom they*, his friends, *were wont to lay daily* in that public spot. "The practice of placing objects of charity at the entrances of temples, both on account of the great concourse and the supposed

of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple, who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms. And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with

5 John, said, Look on us. And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them.

6 Then Peter said, * Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee;

[†] John 9 : 8.

[‡] 2 Cor. 6 : 10.

tendency of devotional feelings to promote those of a charitable kind, was common among Jews and Gentiles, and is still kept up in some parts of the Christian world." (DR. J. A. ALEXANDER.) **The gate . . . called Beautiful**—which gate is not certainly known. It probably took this popular appellation from its magnificence, and very likely was the great eastern gate thus described by Josephus (*Jewish War*, v. 5, 3): "But there was one gate that was without [the inner court] of the holy house, which was of Corinthian brass, and greatly excelled those which were only covered over with silver and gold. . . . Now the magnitudes of the other gates were equal to one another, but that over the Corinthian gate, which opened on the east over against the gate of the holy house itself, was much larger, for its height was fifty cubits, and its doors were forty cubits, and it was adorned after a most costly manner, as having much richer and thicker plates of silver and gold upon them than the other. . . . Now there were fifteen steps which led from the wall of the court of the women to this greater gate." Again (*Antiq.*, xv., 11, 5) he says, doubtless referring to the same gate: "But on the east quarter, toward the sunrising, there was one large gate, through which such as were pure came in, together with their wives; but the temple farther inward in that gate was not allowed to the women; but still more inward was there the third [court of the] temple, whereunto it was not lawful for any but the priests alone to enter." From this it would appear that this great gate was situated between the court of the Gentiles and the court of the women. The sacred narrative implies that it was the most frequented entrance to the temple, and on this account was selected for the cripple as the best place for his daily solicitations. **Ask alms**—a donation to the poor. There were no almshouses then. It does not follow

that cripples should be placed now at church doors seeking aid, as in some countries.

3. About to go. The two apostles were detained, just at this point, by the one addressing them. **Asked an alms.** The expression is full, *asked to receive a donation*. He was seeking not mere pity or kind words, nor was he expecting deliverance from his life-long ills. His heart was bent on receiving some needful gift.

4. Fastening his eyes—looking intently, the same verb used in 1 : 10. Both Peter and John were deeply moved by the Spirit toward this man, by which it became evident to them that a miracle was to be wrought through them. Both may have spoken, but more probably Peter spoke for both. **Look on us**—in order to gain his attention and arouse his expectation. "When thou seest misery in thy brother's face, let him see mercy in thine eye." (QUARLES.) (See Num. 21 : 8; Isa 45 : 22.)

5. This verse shows that Peter and John had aroused both the attention and expectation of the lame man. **He gave heed**—gave attention, fixing his eyes and his mind on them. **Expecting something**—not a miracle, but some material gift, as is evident from the next verse.

6. Silver and gold have I none—what the lame man was asking for and expecting. Silver and gold are put for money. **But such as, etc.**—*but what I have in my power I give thee herewith*. Yet he does not arrogate independent power, but at once adds, **In the name**, by the authority and as a representative, **of Jesus Christ of Nazareth**, a name now generally known in Jerusalem and doubtless known to this cripple. Notice it is not merely Jesus, but also *Christ*, the Messiah. Thus Jesus Christ is brought to this man's heart, by whose power he is commanded to walk. The original has *the Nazarene* as in 2 : 22, which is

¹In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth
7 rise up and walk. And he took him by
the right hand, and lifted him up; and
immediately his feet and ankle bones
8 received strength. And he ^mleaping up
stood, and walked, and entered with them
into the temple, walking, and leaping,
and praising God.

9 And all the people saw him walking
10 and praising God: and they knew that
it was he which sat for ahus at the Beautiful
gate of the temple: and they were
filled with wonder and amazement at that
11 which had happened unto him. And as
the lame man which was healed held
Peter and John, all the people ran together

¹ ch. 4 : 7, 10; Matt. 7 : 22; Mark 16 : 17. ^m Isa. 35 : 36.

equivalent to *from Nazareth*, with an allusion to the contemptuous usage of the name. (See Matt. 2 : 23, note.) He would share the reproach of his Lord. Notice that while Jesus performed miracles by his own authority (Matt. 8 : 3), often with an "I say unto thee" (Luke 5 : 21), the apostles performed them in the name of Christ. (9 : 34; 16 : 18; Mark 16 : 17, 18.)

Rise up and walk—*walk about*, something which he was to do and continue to do. Several of the oldest manuscripts, and the latest critical authority, omit *rise up and*. If they originally belonged to the text, they may have been omitted by copyists, because in the next verse Peter is said to have raised up the lame man.

7. And he took him—rather, *and seizing him by the right hand*. The act was instantaneous, accompanying the command to walk. This he did to encourage and strengthen his faith. The miracles of Jesus were often attended with some outward act. (Matt. 8 : 13; 14 : 31; Mark 7 : 33; 9 : 27.)

Lifted—*raised him up*. "The lame man had merely to yield himself to the power that came upon him." (BENGEL.)

Immediately—his feet and ankle joints were strengthened. He had been a cripple from weakness in the muscles and ligaments of the feet and ankles. The particularity of this description of the disease and cure is characteristic of Luke as a physician.

8. The cure is manifested by leaping up or *forward* from the place where he was sitting (ver. 10), then by standing, and then by walking about, as if to make trial of his strength; a natural gradation. In doing that which he had never learned to do we recognize a wonderful feature of this miracle. (See on ver. 11.) His natural, and religious joy and gratitude were indicated in that he **entered with them into the temple, walking**

about, and leaping and praising God. He enters into the court of Israel (ver. 2) with the apostles, perhaps taking hold of their hands (ver. 11), leaps for joy, and ascribes his cure to the almighty power of God. We may assume that he recognizes Jesus as the Christ, and his divine power exerted in his behalf. (See on ver. 16.)

9. This verse adds the fact, that the miracle was public and widely known. **All the people**—all those who had come to the temple to pray. There must have been a great multitude of witnesses, especially if it was at the Feast of Tabernacles, as we have supposed. The healed man keeps near the apostles, ascribing thanksgiving and praise to God. In thus doing he not only acknowledges that the apostles are servants of God, but that Jesus is the Christ of God.

10. Luke brings to view the certain identity of the lame man, and the great astonishment of the people. **They knew**, or *recognized* him to be the lame beggar who had been accustomed to lie helpless, close to the beautiful gate of the temple. There would be no doubt about either the man, or the cure. **Filled with wonder**—with feelings of surprise, mingled with awe. **Amazement**—transported as it were out of themselves by sudden emotions of astonishment. **At that which had happened unto him**. His weak feet and ankles made strong; a cripple from birth walking about, leaping for joy, and loudly praising God. Such a sudden, unexpected, and unheard-of sight was fitted to arouse astonishment to the highest degree.

11. According to the most approved reading this verse begins, *And holding fast to Peter and John*; which the lame man had been doing and was still doing. Olshausen and some others refer this to a spiritual holding fast, an

unto them in the porch ^a that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering.

12 And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why

marvel ye at this? Or why look ye so earnestly on us, ^a as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man 13 to walk? The God of Abraham, and of

^a ch. 5 : 12; John 10 : 23.

^a ch. 11 : 11-15; Gen. 41 : 16.

inward attachment, a cleaving of the mind to Peter and John. But there is not sufficient reason for this view. The former view is the more natural and agrees better with the context. But why did he hold fast to them? Doubtless excited gratitude would lead him to seize hold of them. But would this explain his continuing to do this while they enter the temple and return to Solomon's porch? Would not keeping near them suffice? It is to be noted that Peter first took him by the hand (ver. 7), that the lame man went with the apostles into the temple (ver. 8), and a little afterward was continuing to hold fast to them in Solomon's porch. Is it not natural to suppose that during all this time he was holding fast to their hands or otherwise, with perhaps slight intermissions? In his new experience he would naturally feel the need of guidance into that portion of the temple where he had never been; of help and direction in walking till he gained full command of every muscle and full confidence in his power to control himself. His leaping (ver. 8) seems to indicate that his movements at first were somewhat irregular; and thus he needed the steady and guiding hands of the apostles. We must neither add to nor take away from the greatness of the miracle. It was marvelous indeed, though he was guided at first by Peter and John. **The porch that is called Solomon's**—implying that there were other porticoes and that this was much noted. It is also mentioned in ch. 5 : 12 and John 10 : 23. It was a portico or hall upon the eastern side, in the court of the Gentiles, and probably where Solomon had erected the entrance porch to the first temple. Josephus (*Antiq.*, xx., 9, 7) regarded it as that built by Solomon himself, which had been left uninjured in the destruction of the temple by the Babylonians.

12-26. **PETER'S ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE.** (Gen. 22 : 18; Ex. 3 : 6; Lev. 17 : 29; Deut. 15 : 18, 19; 1 Peter 1 : 20, 21; 2 Peter 3 : 12.)

This address is similar to the Pentecostal one, in that it presents Jesus as the Messiah and appeals to the Old Testament Scriptures and enforces repentance. It goes a step beyond it in the motives derived from the future blessings of Christ's kingdom and his second coming. It must be borne in mind that Peter was addressing many devout Israelites, who were looking for the Messiah, and were ready to accept of Jesus as the Christ as soon as convinced. (4:4.) This helps to explain the difference of direction (ver. 19-21) from that of Pentecost (2:38) and from that to the jailer. (16:31.)

12. When Peter saw it—the hasty and excited concourse of the people and their exhibitions of amazement. **Answered**—not to any question, but to the wish for information implied in their looks and wonderings. Addresses are often introduced in this way in the New Testament. (Matt. 11 : 25, note.) **Men of Israel**—an honorable designation, fitting to the people who had come to the temple for worship and were representatives of the Jewish nation. (2:22.)

Why marvel at this thing which had occurred (ver. 10), or *at this man* who has been cured (ver. 11, 16)—either construction being allowable, but the latter perhaps somewhat preferable. They had cause for wonder, but they failed to see through whose power this great miracle had been done. Their wondering was fundamentally wrong. **Why look ye so earnestly on us?** *Why on us fasten ye your eyes?* *Us* is emphatic. Peter would make Christ emphatic and turn their interest to him. **As though by our own power or holiness, godliness, piety.** The cure had not been effected by their own independent power, nor as a reward of piety, as some of them might suppose.

13. In contrast he points to the author of the cure, the God of the patriarchs, whom he reverently named according to their customary formula. (7:32; Exod.

Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, **hath glorified** his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and **denied him** in the presence of Pilate, when he was

14 determined to let *him* go. But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and **desired a** 15 murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Prince of life, whom God hath

p John 12 : 16; 17 : 1.

q Matt. 27 : 20.

r Luke 23 : 18, 19.

3 : 16.) He also says, **the God of our fathers** (ver. 25 also)—ranking himself with his hearers as an Israelite and a worshiper of the same God. Thus he carefully and wisely selects his words, that he might not only at the beginning favorably impress his hearers, but also remind them that the new religion was not inconsistent with the old, that in fact it emanated from the God of Israel. **Hath glorified**—in a state of glory in heaven. (Luke 24 : 26; John 7 : 39; 12 : 16; 17 : 1, 5.) This miracle, and all of Christ's miracles, his resurrection and ascension and the sending and the workings of the Holy Spirit, were manifestations and evidences of his glory. (2 : 22, 33.) Meyer limits it to the honor conferred at this time upon Jesus by this miracle, which is too narrow a view. Peter explains the miracle (ver. 16); but here the glorified and exalted Messiah accords better with the Holy and Righteous one (ver. 14) and the Prince of life (ver. 15), and with what is said elsewhere of God glorifying the Son. (John 13 : 31, 32.) See also references above. **His Son**, rather, *his servant*, *Jesus*. Another word is used where Jesus is spoken of as Son of God. The word *servant*, literally, *a boy*, was used of a servant of any age and, in imitation of the Hebrew, came to be used of a devout worshiper of God, one who fulfills God's will (4 : 25; Luke 1 : 69), and was prophetically applied to the Messiah. (Isa. 42 : 1; 52 : 13; 53 : 11. See Matt. 12 : 18.) Jesus was personally a son, but officially a *servant*, and is so styled here and in ver. 26 and 4 : 27, 30. Peter thus at once presents Jesus with a Messianic appellation whom God had glorified. This word rendered servant is never applied to the apostles or the disciples, but a less tender and stronger word is frequently applied to them, meaning bond-servant or slave. (Rom. 1 : 1; Col. 4 : 12; Eph. 6 : 6.) The hearers of Peter doubtless perceived the prophetic use of the term, as applied to Jesus. **Whom ye delivered up**, through your leaders and rulers, to Pilate, the Roman governor.

And denied him as your Messiah. (Luke 23 : 2.) **In the presence of Pilate**, literally, *to the face of Pilate*, before his eyes. (John 19 : 15. See Gal. 2 : 11.)

Was determined, etc.—*when he decided to release him*. (Matt. 27 : 24; Luke 23 : 14-16.) As a judge, Pilate had decided to release Jesus, but he retracted his decision and yielded to the clamor of the people and the threats of the rulers.

14. But ye—in emphatic contrast to Pilate. Peter repeats the terrible charge that they had **denied** the Messiah, whom he here styles the *Holy and Righteous One*, a fitting title of the *servant* of Jehovah. (ver. 13.) Jesus was not merely the *Holy One* morally, but officially, the one set apart and consecrated, the Messiah, the Son of God. (Luke 4 : 34; John 6 : 69.) He was the *Righteous* or *Just One*, not merely as innocent as adjudged by Pilate, but positively upright in his external life. (John 16 : 10; 1 John 2 : 1.) As an epithet of the Messiah, see also 7 : 52; 22 : 14. In emphatic contrast Peter mentions *Barabbas*, **a murderer**—literally, *a man, a murderer*. That they should have asked not merely a man, but a murderer, to be *graciously delivered* to them, that he might go free, was indeed infamous in itself, but more so in contrast to their denying the Messiah (this verse), and to killing him (next verse).

15. And killed—through Pilate and the Roman tribunal, the only way they could judicially put him to death. **The Prince or Author of life** (as in Heb. 12 : 2). Jesus was the Author of eternal life (John 3 : 16; 10 : 28; 2 Tim. 1 : 10), of all life (John 1 : 3, 4), and the first fruits of those that rise from the dead. (1 Cor. 15 : 23.) The fact that they *killed* him, and that he through the apostles had brought increased vitality and strength to the feet and ankles of a cripple (ver. 16), leads us to include physical as well as spiritual life. How great the aggravation of their sin and guilt in taking the life of him from whom all life proceeds. But **God raised**, awakened and recalled him

raised from the dead; * whereof we are 16 witnesses. And his name † through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this per-

fect soundness in the presence of you all. 17 And now, brethren, I ‡ wot that through ignorance ye did it, as *did* also you 18 rulers. But those things, which God be- fore had showed § by the mouth of all his

* ch. 1 : 22; 2 : 32.

† ch. 14 : 9; Matt. 9 : 22; John 14 : 12. 50 : 6; 53 : 5, etc.; Dan.

John 14 : 12.

‡ Gen. 21 : 26.

§ Ps. 22; Isa.

9 : 26; 1 Peter 1 : 10, 11.

from among the dead. Notice how Peter dwells upon their great sin in rejecting and killing their Messiah, showing step by step, and by successive contrasts, their crime and guilt. His words were eminently fitted to produce conviction of sin.

16. Having held up the slain, the risen and the glorified Jesus, Peter presents him as the cause of the cure. **And his name, etc.** *Upon the faith in his name*, whose character as the Messiah has been presented, *has his name made this man strong, whom ye see healed, and know* as formerly a cripple; *even the faith which is through him*, who is the Author and the end of faith (Heb. 12 : 2), *gave him this perfect soundness*, this unimpaired condition of the body, all of the members being healthy and fit for use, *in the presence of you all*. Notice what prominence Peter gives to the **name** of Jesus and to **the faith**, by mentioning each of them twice. *Name* is used for every thing which the name covers, for all that is recognized and professed in Jesus, and especially those things which Peter had just declared concerning him, as the Messiah, the Holy and Righteous One and the Author of life. The faith of course was exercised by the apostles, but does it not also include faith as exercised by the man himself? There is nothing to exclude the supposition. In Matthew 17 : 20, and Mark 9 : 23, 24, faith in the agent and subject are both presented as necessary to the working of a miracle. It is natural to suppose that the lame man had heard of Jesus and his miracles and of the large increase of his disciples, and that the words of Peter, inspired by the Spirit, and the name of Jesus, came to his heart, with quickening power, encouraging him to attempted obedience to the command to walk. His faith also manifested itself in praising God. (See on ver. 7. 8.)

17. Having faithfully reprovcd them

for rejecting and killing him who was evidenced as the Messiah, by his resurrection and by this miracle in their very presence, he softens his tone and prepares in fraternal kindness to lead them to repentance. **And now**—as the matter stands. **Brethren**—intimating his fellow feeling and love for them. More conciliatory than in ver. 12. (See 2 : 22, 29.) **I wot, etc.**—*I know ye acted in ignorance*. Peter concedes this, not as an excuse for their sin, but as a palliation of their guilt. (1 Cor. 2 : 8.) Jesus made the same concession in his prayer for his murderers. (Luke 23 : 34.) As the sin was committed in ignorance there was hope that it might be forgiven, and an encouragement to repent. Compare Paul's declaration concerning himself. (1 Tim. 1 : 13-16.) The sin of ignorance was recognized in the Old Testament, and a sin offering provided for it. (Num. 15 : 27, 28.) There were different degrees of ignorance, and hence different degrees of guilt. Their ignorance, however, resulted from unbelief, and existed notwithstanding the light that shone from Christ's character and life, and from his words and works. These they ought to have examined and believed. (John 12 : 38-40.) Paul was the chief of sinners notwithstanding his ignorance (1 Tim. 1 : 13); and they were guilty of most heinous sin. (2. 23.)

18. Continuing in the same strain of kindness, Peter says, **But**, what was a crime on your part, was an accomplishment of a divine purpose. This fact was a ground of hope for repentance, but did not lessen their guilt. They acted freely. (2. 23.) God's sovereignty and human freedom and responsibility may be illustrated by the case of Joseph. (Gen. 45 : 8, 50 : 20.) **All his (the) prophets**, viewed as a whole. (Ver. 21, 23. See Luke 24 : 27, 44.) The drift of prophecy had pointed toward Christ, his sufferings and death. **That Christ**—rather, according to the most approved reading, *his Christ*, his anointed. **Should**

prophets, that Christ should suffer, he
19 hath so fulfilled. Repent ye therefore,

and be converted, [†] that your sins may be
blotted out, when the [‡] times of refresh-

[†] Isa. 43 : 25.

[‡] Ps. 72 : 6-17; Isa. 61 : 1-3, 10; Matt. 11 : 28, 29; 2 Thess. 1 : 7, 10.

suffer—death on the cross. **So fulfilled**—God has thus accomplished, as related in verses 14, 15, 17.

19. Therefore, since your crime is not unpardonable, and the Messianic redemption, foretold by the prophets, has been realized in the sufferings of Jesus. **Repent.** (See on 2 : 38.) **Be**

converted—rather, *turn*, that is, to God. (Matt. 13 : 15.) The preceding word refers to the inner change of mind; this to the positive results, the corresponding change of life. In turning to God, faith is implied, which had been mentioned in ver. 16. **That your sins may be blotted out**—that the guilt of your sins may be totally erased. Instead of *forgiveness* (2 : 38).

Peter here uses the stronger figure of erasure, as of a handwriting. (Col. 2 : 14.) The same figure is found in the Old Testament. (Isa. 43 : 25; Ps. 51 : 9.) **When the times**, etc. This translation is not grammatically sustained. Rather,

In order that times, or seasons, of refreshing may come. The original word for *refreshing*, according to its derivation, means literally a *cooling*, or relief from the effects of heat, hence a reviving, a refreshing. It may here be applied either to the consolations of religion and the spiritual blessing attending and following turning to the Lord, or to the Messianic joy and blessedness to be ushered in by the return of Christ from heaven. Commentators are divided on these views. The former view seems the most natural, if this verse be taken by itself. The word *times* is in the plural and without the article, and thus rather indicates repeated occasions, instead of one occasion. It also accords with repentance, as a condition, and the results of repentance, as elsewhere presented in the Bible. (2 : 38; 8 : 4, 8; John 3 : 15; 7 : 38; Rom. 8 : 12; Ps. 51 : 8-15.) On the other hand the next verse appears to refer to the second coming of Christ, and this verse is closely connected with it, and the two verbs, *may come* and *shall send*, may very naturally be referred to the same period of time. An interpreta-

tion which touches both of these sides, bearing a relation to present influences of the Spirit and to Christ's second coming would have much to commend itself as the true one. Such an interpretation may be found in the blessings of the Gospel Dispensation with special reference to the Jewish people. The early Christians were not only looking for the second coming of Christ, but for the reception of the gospel by the people of Israel. Prophets had foretold three blessings (Isa. 32 : 1-3, 15-18; 65 : 17-25; 59 : 20, 21; Jer. 31 : 33), and Paul, who later doubtless understood God's designs toward his ancient chosen people better than Peter now did, foretells the fulfillment of such predictions in the restoration of Israel. (Rom. 11 : 26, 27.) The times of refreshing may thus refer to all those seasons of revival, either among Jews or Gentiles, which prepare the way, or bring about this happy result to the Jewish nation. These blessings and the return of Christ are to be connected with and to follow repentance, reformation of life, and prayer. God has seen fit to connect these as the means and the end or as the antecedent and consequent, so that in his plan the one is necessary to the other. (Ezek. 36 : 37; Zech. 13 : 9. See Mark 6 : 5; Heb. 4 : 16; 2 Peter 3 : 12.) Both John and Jesus had made the coming kingdom a reason for repentance (Matt. 3 : 2, 17), and the blessing of that Dispensation, especially to the Jewish people, were a strong motive to Peter's hearers to exercise repentance. Neither could they expect to enjoy them and see those glorious seasons follow, except they repented of having rejected the Messiah, turning to him, and heartily receiving him as their Saviour, and the promised One of Israel. When such seasons might be enjoyed, or how soon the Lord might return were unknown to the disciples. (1 : 7, 11.) They were longing for it, and expecting it, and laboring to be prepared for it. (2 Peter 3 : 11, 12.) They were to be witnesses to the Jewish people, and as they then thought, through them to all nations. (1 : 8; Luke 24 : 47.)

ing shall come from the presence of the
20 Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ,
which before was preached unto you:
21 whom the heaven must receive until the
times of a restitution of all things, which

God hath spoken by the mouth of all his
holy prophets since the world began.

22 For Moses truly said unto the fathers,
b A Prophet shall the Lord your God
raise up unto you of your brethren, like

a Isa. 1: 26, 27; Mal. 3: 3, 4; Matt. 17: 11; Rom. 8: 18-25. b Deut. 18: 15, 18, 19.

They had not learned yet God's plans
of work among Jews and Gentiles, and
how far distant was Christ's second
coming.

20. Motives for repentance are still
pressed. **And he shall send—**
rather, *And that he may send the Christ*
appointed for you, Jesus. (1 Peter 1: 20.)
Peter here returns to Jesus the Messiah,
whom he presented at the beginning of
his address. (Ver. 13.) He was chosen and
appointed for their salvation. The
Common Version, **Which before was**
preached, is not in accordance with the
best manuscripts. The most natural refer-
ence in this verse is, not to Christ's first
coming, nor to his spiritual presence
in the hearts of his disciples (Matt. 28: 20),
but to his visible return, which had
been promised. (1: 11.) To be prepared
for this, and to share in the blessing of
the Messiah's coming, and of the restora-
tion of all things (ver. 21), they needed
repentance and reformation. (Eos. 14: 1 f.,
Zech. 12: 10.)

21. **Whom the heaven must re-
ceive**—his presence there being a
present and fixed fact, **until the**
times of restitution, the restoration
of all things, not only of the true
theocracy, but also of that more perfect
state of order, purity, and happiness
which existed before the fall. The
Jews expected a golden age of purity
and blessedness under the Messiah,
when all evils would be set right.
(1: 6.) Peter's hearers were thus pre-
pared to understand somewhat his lan-
guage. Doubtless he himself afterward
understood it better than he did then.
The times of refreshing (ver. 19) and the
times of restoration are not the same,
though doubtless they overlap each
other. The former is preparatory, and
runs into the latter. The restoration
of all things will take place after the
second coming of Christ, and is referred
to in Matt. 19: 28 as *the renovation* or
new birth of all things. There will be
"new heavens and a new earth, wherein
dwelleth righteousness" (2 Peter 3: 13),

and the deliverance of the whole crea-
tion from the bondage of corruption.
(Rom. 8: 19-23. See Rev. 21: 1-5; 1 Cor. 15: 24-28.)

Which refers not to "things," but to
"times." **All his holy prophets—**
All should be omitted, according to the
highest critical authorities. **Since**
the world began—from the begin-
ning of prophetic revelation. This
verse met any doubt regarding prom-
ised blessings growing out of Christ's
ascension into heaven. Peter intimates
that this is not a final withdrawal, but
a temporary absence till the time of
that glorious era of restoration toward
which all prophecy pointed. (See Isa. 11:
6-9; Dan. 2: 44; 7: 14; Mic. 4: 3-4; Zech. 14: 20.)
Heaven—where God dwells, without
any definite regard to its locality.
Times—in general with an idea of
continuance; *times*, in ver. 19, is an-
other word, with an idea of a limited
period, *seasons*. Both words are used
in 1: 7.

22. Peter adduces some passages
from the Old Testament in confirma-
tion of what he had said, and which
might lead them to heed his admoni-
tion to repentance. (Ver. 19.) **For** and
unto the fathers are not found in
the oldest and best manuscripts. **Mo-**
ses truly—Moses indeed said, as well
as all the prophets (ver. 24) who agree
with him and corroborate his state-
ments. Peter naturally and fittingly
begins with Moses, their first and great-
est prophet. (Num. 12: 6, 7.) The passage
quoted is from Deut. 18: 15, 19. It is
partly taken from the Septuagint ver-
sion and partly a new translation from
the Hebrew. Stephen cites this passage
in 7: 37, with the same application
to Christ. A like reference of this pas-
sage to Christ is implied in John 4: 25;
1: 25; 6: 14, 15; 7: 40, 41. See notes
on these passages. This appears to
have been the interpretation among the
Jews. **Like unto me**—as prophet,
lawgiver, but especially as mediator.
Moses had acted as mediator at Horeb,
so God would send them another medi-

unto me; him shall ye hear in all things
23 whatsoever he shall say unto you. And
it shall come to pass, *that every soul,*
which will not hear that prophet, shall
be destroyed from among the people.
24 Yea, and all the prophets from *Samuel*

and those that follow after, as many as
have spoken, have likewise foretold of
25 these days. ⁴Ye are the children of the
prophets, and of the covenant which God
made with our fathers, saying unto Abra-
ham, 'And in thy seed shall all the kin-

^c ch. 13 : 20; 1 Sam. 3 : 20; 2 Sam. 7 : 16. ^d ch. 2 : 39; Rom. 9 : 4, 5, 8.

ator. (Deut. 18 : 16-18.) Christ both resembled Moses and excelled him. (Heb. 3 : 2-6; 8 : 6.) The less may be compared with the greater and the greater with the less. (Matt. 5 : 48.) But many with margin of the Revised Version and the Improved Bible Union Version, would translate here and in 7 : 37, *As he did me*—that is, in the same manner as he raised up me. Inferentially, these words thus translated, as well as the whole quotation, imply a likeness of that prophet to Moses. **Him shall you hear**, etc. You shall be able to hear him and it will be your duty to obey him. This finds its fulfillment throughout the whole Gospel Dispensation, especially when Israel shall receive the gospel. (Ver. 19.)

23. Every soul which will not hear, so as to obey that prophet. **Shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.** The passage in Deut. 18 : 19 is "I will require it of him," which is full of meaning. The Septuagint's translation, "I will take vengeance," brings out the implied meaning positively. Peter emphasizes it by using the words found in Lev. 23 : 29, "shall be utterly destroyed," etc., thus pointing to the highest kind of punishment. They shall be deprived of all their privileges and visited with utter destruction. The expression was of frequent occurrence (Gen. 17 : 14; Exod. 12 : 15, 19), and denotes capital punishment. As applied to the soul under the gospel, it means exclusion from the kingdom of God, and death, which is the wages of sin. (John 3 : 18; 8 : 24; Matt. 25 : 46.) We have here an example of a composite quotation; that is, where two or more quotations are merged into one.

24. Samuel is named here, and also in Ps. 99 : 6, as he was the next great prophet after Moses and the first in a long line of prophets who foretold the coming of the Messiah and his kingdom. This line continued, with

scarcely any interruption, to the days of Malachi, about seven hundred and fifty years. In Heb. 1 : 5, a quotation from 2 Sam. 7 : 14, "I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son," is applied to Christ. **And those that follow after**, or *even those in order*, succeeding one another through a long period. **Have foretold**—rather, *have also told*. **Of these days**—of which he had been speaking, and of which Moses had foretold. (Ver. 23.) Not merely the days of restoration (ver. 21), but rather the days then present as connected with and leading on to the seasons of refreshing (ver. 19), and to the times of restoration of all things.

25. Peter makes an emphatic and closing appeal to his hearers. **Ye are the children (sons) of the prophets and of the covenant**—a Hebrew mode of speech, meaning those to whom the prophetic promises and covenant belong. (Rom. 9 : 4.) See a similar use of the word *son* in Matt. 8 : 12; 13 : 38. They were the participators—the inheritors of the blessings which the prophets foretold and of covenanted mercies. Hence Peter enforces their duty to accept the promised blessings, and therefore the gospel is first preached to them. (Ver. 26.) He specifies **the covenant, the arrangement and promise** which God made with Abraham, centering in the one great descendant in whom all families of the earth should be blessed. This promise was made three times to Abraham. (Gen. 12 : 3; 18 : 18; 22 : 18.) It was repeated to Isaac and Jacob. (Gen. 26 : 4; 28 : 14.) (See Rom. 4 : 13-16; Gal. 3 : 7-9, 14, 29.) **In thy seed**—thy *descendant*, the Messiah (as in Gal. 1 : 16). He was *the seed* of Abraham toward whom all prophecy centered, and from whom salvation and all spiritual blessings have come to men. **Kindreds**—families in the wider sense of nations, peoples.

26. Unto you first—as heirs of the

26 dreds of the earth be blessed.' *Unto you first, God, having raised up his Son

Jesus, sent him to bless you, ^fin turning away every one of you from his iniquities.

* ch. 13 : 46 ; Luke 24, 47. ^f Isa. 59 : 20 ; Matt. 1 : 21 ; Titus 2 : 11-14.

covenant—arrangement—and belonging to that people whom God had chosen and to whom he had given special promises. Paul as well as Peter recognized that the gospel was first to be preached to the Jews. (13 : 46 ; Rom. 1 : 16.) Peter here implies that the blessings of the Messiah should also be extended to Gentiles. This was also included in the covenant-promise to Abraham. (Ver. 25.) Peter expected that the Gentiles would first embrace Judaism and through it the gospel. (See 2 : 39, note.) **Having raised up his Son,** rather, *Servant*. (See on ver. 13.) *Raised up*, according to the prediction of Moses. (Ver. 22.) The reference is not to Christ's resurrection, but to his appearance as the promised Messiah. **Jesus** should be omitted according to the highest critical authorities. **Sent him to bless you**—that thus the promise, "be blessed" (Ver. 25), might first be fulfilled in them. **In turning away every one**—showing how they were to be blessed. Not collectively, but individually; not merely pardoning the sins that are past, but saving them from sins that are future; not *in* their sins, but *from* their sins. Thus Peter excludes the idea that his Jewish hearers could enjoy the promised blessings of the Messiah without repentance and reformation. A fitting close of such an address, containing a strong reason why they should repent. (Ver. 19.) Though the priests came upon them suddenly (4:1), Peter had reached a good stopping place.

In comparing this address, as well as the one in the preceding chapter (see closing note on 2 : 41) with Peter's epistles, we see striking resemblances, tempered by age and a richer experience, and by the fact that in the former he is addressing the unconverted, while in the latter he is writing to Christians. In both he recognizes the fulfillment of prophecy in Christ and his gospel (ver. 18, 1 Peter 1 : 10) ; in both he is a witness of the sufferings and resurrection of Christ (ver. 15 ; 1 Peter 5 : 1) ; in both he presents the glory of Christ and the power of faith. (Ver.

13, 16 ; 1 Peter 1 : 21.) In ver. 13 Jesus is Jehovah's servant, and in 1 Peter 2 : 21-23 his obedient and submissive servitude is held up to view. Here are foretold the seasons of refreshing and the times of the restoration of all things ; in 2 Peter 3 : 10, the day of the Lord, and the new heavens and earth. In the former Peter seems to regard it as near at hand ; but in the latter, after years of experience and growth in knowledge, he views it as perhaps far distant. In connection with both he speaks of repentance and derives from the last days a motive for reformation and holy living. (Ver. 19, 26 ; 2 Peter 3 : 11.)

PRACTICAL REMARKS.

1. Christians should love and honor the place and hour of prayer. Christian fellowship is especially fitting such seasons. Ver. 1 ; 16 : 13 ; Dan. 6 : 10 ; Isa. 56 : 7 ; Ps. 55 : 14.)

2. The cripple from birth, carried to the temple gate, illustrates the inability of the sinner. (Ver. 2, 3 ; Mark 2, 3, 4 ; Jer. 18 : 23 ; Matt. 7 : 18 ; Rom. 8 : 7.)

3. We must first arrest the attention of the needy if we would do them good. (Ver. 4, 5 ; 8 : 6 ; 16 : 28.)

4. The child of God should be kind and compassionate, ready to do good as he has opportunity. The poor awakened and hungry soul should not expect in vain. (Ver. 4, 5 ; Gal. 6 : 9, 10 ; Luke 6 : 30.)

5. The servants of Christ have the true riches, which they offer to poor and perishing souls. (Ver. 6 ; 2 Cor. 5 : 20 ; 6 : 10)

6. The seeking sin-sick soul, needs not only our directing and encouraging words, but often our helping hands. (Ver. 7 ; 9 : 17.)

7. How many forget to thank God for bodily recovery ; but such as are spiritually healed remember God and his people. (Ver. 8 ; Luke 17 : 15-19)

8. As the cripple was widely known, so God sometimes converts notoriously wicked men, in order to manifest widely the power of his grace. (Ver. 9, 10 ; 1 Tim. 1 : 15, 16.)

9. Note the account of the miracle, its

simplicity, sincerity, honesty, and evident truthfulness. The man, lame from his birth and well-known; he could not have been an impostor. Friends and foes of Jesus, all were convinced of the reality of the cure. (Ver. 9-11; 4: 16.)

10. The work of God generally excites wonder, calls together the people, and gives opportunity to preach the gospel. (Ver. 10, 11; 2: 6, 7; 8: 5-13.)

11. Whatever success attends the minister of the gospel or however great his talents or personal piety, he should ascribe all the glory to Jesus Christ, since it is only through him that sinners can be saved. (Ver. 12; 4: 12; 2 Cor. 3: 3: 5, 6.)

12. God of the Old Dispensation is God of the New. The Messiah was promised and foreshadowed in the One and manifested and glorified in the Other. (Ver. 13; 2 Cor. 1: 20; Rev. 19: 10.)

13. How great the guilt of those who *knowingly* reject the Holy and Righteous One and the Prince of life. (Ver. 14-17; Heb. 10: 29.)

14. The resurrection of Jesus, the miracles performed by him and his disciples, are evidences that he is the Author of life. (Ver. 16; Heb. 5: 8, 9.)

15. The highest success is only attained through faith in Christ by both preacher and hearer. (Ver. 16; 1 Thess. 2: 10-12.)

16. Ignorance may mitigate, but not excuse crime. (Ver. 17; Luke 23: 34; Hos. 4: 6.)

17. Wicked men may fulfill God's designs, and God may make the wrath of man to praise him, but this does not excuse them since their own wicked purposes and deeds are voluntary. (Ver. 18; Ps. 76: 10.)

18. The purposes of God, the sufferings of Christ, and even the ignorance of men, may afford reasons for repentance. (Ver. 17-19; Rom. 2: 4.)

19. Repentance and pardon of sin precede spiritual refreshment. (Ver. 19, Isa. 57: 15-18.)

20. We may, as it were, hasten the coming of our Lord by the exercise of repentance and faith, and by prayer and efforts. (Ver. 19, 20; 2 Peter 3: 12; Matt. 6: 10; Rev. 22: 20.)

21. Revivals of religion are especially characteristic of the present Dispensation. If not enjoyed, the fault is ours, not Christ's. (Ver. 19, 20; Isa. 61: 1-3.)

22. While our Lord is absent we should be diligent in seeking the salvation of souls, thus increasing the vast multitudes who

shall welcome his return. (Ver. 21; Matt. 24: 14; 1 Cor. 15: 58.)

23. The second coming of Christ will result in the restoration of all things to the order and harmony of universal holiness. (Ver. 21; Isa. 11: 1-9.)

24. Jesus the Prophet brings salvation to all who hear him, but destruction to all who reject him. (Ver. 22, 24; Mark 16: 16.)

25. There is a unity in all of God's revelations. Christ is the great center. (Ver. 24; Eph. 1: 4-14.)

26. It is a great blessing to have a godly parentage and early to hear the gospel; but a greater blessing to be turned from sin and saved from it. (Ver. 25, 26; Luke 10: 20; 11: 28.)

Ch. 4: In the preceding chapter Luke gives the occasion of the first assault upon the church; in this chapter he describes the assault itself, led on by the Sadducean party. Peter and John are imprisoned, arraigned before the Sanhedrin, and released. Many believe; the church is united and prosperous; and a spirit of generous liberality prevails, a noted instance in the case of Barnabas being given.

1-22. THE ARREST, ARRAIGNMENT, DEFENSE, AND RELEASE OF PETER AND JOHN. (1 Peter 2: 4, 8. Ps. 118: 22.)

1. As they spake—while they were speaking. They were interrupted, though Peter had reached a fitting close in his address. (See on 3: 26.) **Came upon them**, with the idea of suddenness. (See the same word in 6: 12, 12: 7; Luke 10: 40.) A favorite word with Luke, but used only three times by Paul, and by no other writer in the New Testament. **The priests**—those on duty in the temple; who also acted as the guard or police force. See Luke 1: 9, in reference to their temple service. According to some ancient authorities it should read *chief priests*, comprising the high priest, and those who had been deposed from the highest priesthood, and the members of the families from whom the high priest was selected. (Ver. 6.) It has been common to include the heads of the twenty-four classes into which the priesthood was divided. (See on ver. 23.) Peter was addressing the people in the temple, and if it was at the time of one of their feasts, a

Peter and John imprisoned. Their defence before the Sanhedrin. Their release.

4 And as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple,

§ ch. 5 : 24; Luke 22 : 4.

greater number of priests would be on duty. See note on introductory remarks on section. (3:1-11.) **Captain of the temple**—the most important personage connected with the temple, next to the high priest. He had under him a body of Levites, and was probably himself a priest, and kept guard in and around the temple, and was responsible for its safety, as well as for the moneys and other treasures it contained. Josephus speaks of an officer of the same name. (*Jewish War*, vi. 5, 3; ii. 17, 2.) In the Apocrypha the *Prefect* or *Guardian*, of the temple is mentioned (2 Mace 3:4), also governors of the temple. (Esdras 1:8) The same or a similar office seems to have existed from an early date. (1 Chron 9:11; 2 Kings 12:9; 25:18; 2 Chron. 31:13; Jer. 20:1) There may have been several similar officers, and hence the plural in Luke 22:4, 52, who served at the temple in turn, or who commanded different bands or guards. (See Ps 134:1.) **The Sadducees**—a sect of Jews who rightly rejected all tradition, but denied many important truths, such as the resurrection of the body (Luke 20:27), the existence of angels and spirits (23:8), and the immortality of the soul and future retribution. (JOSEPHUS, *Jewish War*, ii. 8, 14.) They recognized the authority of the Old Testament alone, especially the Law, in matters of faith and morals. Josephus says (*Antiq.* xviii. 1, 4) that their doctrine is received but by a few, yet by those still of the greatest dignity. They were mostly men distinguished by birth, wealth, and official position, and not averse to the favor of the Herod family and the Romans. (Mark 3:6, note) The word *Sadducee* is of doubtful origin. Some trace it to a Hebrew word meaning *righteous*, denoting their content to be simply righteous people; but others, to Zadoc, who was high priest in the time of David, and exhibited great fidelity to the king and his house (1 Kings 1:32 f.); and hence his descendants and adherents appear

and the Sadducees, came upon them, 2 being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead. And they laid hands on them, and put them in hold

h ch. 23:8; Matt. 22:23.

to have been called Zadokites, or Sadducees. (See 5:17.)

2. The motive of their attack upon Peter and John is given. **Being grieved**—*being stirred up, indignant*, at the frequent repetition and continuance of the cause assigned. The Revised Version renders, *being sore troubled*. This word is also found in 16:18. A question arises whether this clause describes the Sadducees only, or the priests and the captain also. The Sadducees probably instigated the arrest. The priests and captain of the temple may also have been Sadducees or sympathizers with them. (5:17.) It may also be added that the apostles were teaching without official authority, and by implication they taught the resurrection through the resurrection of Jesus. Thus while the latter was pre-eminently the instigating cause, the priests who were not of the Sadducean party would naturally be displeased that such men as Peter and John should teach the people at all, especially that Jesus, whom they themselves had crucified, had arisen, and was the Messiah. (5:28.) The captain of the temple would also be desirous of preventing any disturbance within the sacred inclosure. **Preached through**, rather, *in*, **Jesus the resurrection**, etc.—in his case they proclaimed a resurrection from the dead, and thus incidentally and by inference they taught a general resurrection. (See 17:31) The fact that Christ had risen was fatal to a leading doctrine of the Sadducees. (23:6-8.) Here we may see one reason why the Pharisees were so passive in their treatment of the disciples, and the Sadducees their most violent persecutors. (See Matt 22:34; Luke 20:39.)

3. **Laid hands on them**—with an idea of some violence in the arrest. **In hold**—*in custody*—in a guard house or prison. **Eventide**—*evening*. It was 3 P. M. when the miracle was performed, which was the beginning of the first evening, the decline

unto the next day: for it was now evening.

- 4 ⁱHowbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.

5 And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes, 6 and ^kAnnas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high

ⁱ Phil. 1: 12-14.

^k Luke 3: 2; John 11: 49; 18: 13, 14.

of day. Then Peter and the others entered the temple, and returned to Solomon's porch. His address was doubtless much longer than the report given in the preceding chapter, so that *evening* here would seem to refer to the second evening, or close of day. The time is given as a reason for putting them in prison till the next day. Probably the Sanhedrin could not be assembled that night at so short a notice.

4. Howbeit—*but* notwithstanding all this, and in contrast to the conduct of their opposers. **The word**—a common term denoting the gospel message concerning Jesus as the risen Saviour. (6: 4; 8: 4.) **Believed**—received it as true and accepted Jesus as the Christ. This is one of the Scriptural expressions for conversion. (8: 12; 13: 48; 18: 8.) **Number of the men.** Some suppose that both sexes are included; but the word rendered men here generally refers to males. As in modern missions, the first converts were largely among men. It was also more common to number the men. (Matt. 14: 21.) **Was, rather, became, about five thousand.** Not five thousand new converts, but the number of believers at Jerusalem. This was probably the resident membership, for doubtless some foreign Jews, converted at Pentecost, had returned to their homes.

5. On the morrow—the next morning. (Luke 10: 35.) The Sanhedrin usually met after the morning sacrifice. Possibly an early meeting had been arranged. **Their rulers**—of the people, the Jews. *Rulers* here designated the Sanhedrin, the highest civil and ecclesiastical court of the Jews. Two of the classes composing it are named, **the elders**, the heads of families, men of rank and influence, and **the scribes**, learned men, whose duty it was to preserve, copy, and expound the Scriptures and the traditions; called also doctors (Luke 5: 17) and lawyers. (Matt. 22: 35.) The chief priests formed

the third class, and are referred to in the next verse and in ver. 1. The Sanhedrin took its rise after the Babylonish captivity and consisted of seventy-one persons, who are said to have been divided as follows: twenty-four priests, twenty-four elders, and twenty-two scribes, presided over by a president, the high priest, if he were a suitable person. They were to be persons morally blameless and sound physically; middle aged, good looking, wealthy, and learned, married and having children. This verse closes at this point in the Common Version. It is better, with the Revised Version, to insert here (from the end of ver. 6, Common Version) **were gathered together at Jerusalem.** There was a meeting of the Sanhedrin. Some ancient manuscripts read *into Jerusalem*, implying that some of the Sanhedrin lived out of the city. But the greater weight of critical authority favors *in Jerusalem*. The Sanhedrin generally held its meetings in one of the halls of the temple-court, on the south side or the east side. The members of the city assembled.

6. Annas the high priest. He was appointed high priest, A. D. 7, and was removed by the Roman procurator, A. D. 14. "He had five sons who had all performed the office of high priest to God, and he had himself enjoyed that dignity a long time formerly." (JOSEPHUS, *Ant.*, xx., 9, 1.) His son-in-law, Joseph Caiaphas, was now the acting high priest, holding the office from A. D. 25 to A. D. 36. These facts help to explain the great influence of Annas through a long period. The high priesthood, according to the Mosaic law, was for life, and hence, though deposed, Annas would still be regarded by the Jews as the legitimate high priest. Luke (3: 2) mentions the high priesthood of both Annas and Caiaphas, doubtless because the former was regarded in some sense as sharing the

priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem. And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, ¹By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?

⁸ ^m Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people,

9 and elders of Israel, if we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made ¹⁰ whole; be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, ⁿthat by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom

¹ Matt. 21 : 23 ; Luke 20 : 2.

^m Luke 12 : 11, 12.

ⁿ ch. 3 : 6, 16.

office with the latter. Some regard Caiaphas as the actual high priest and Annas as the president of the Sanhedrin; others think that Annas acted as deputy of Caiaphas. (John 18 : 13.) **John and Alexander.** Nothing is known of these persons beyond the fact that they were priests. **The kindred of the high priest—the high-priestly family.** It would appear from 5 : 17 that they were Sadducees. Thus this meeting of the Sanhedrin was a packed one, the Sadducean party being out in full force. (Ver. 1.)

7. The prisoners formally arraigned. **Had set them—caused them to stand—in the midst,** where all could see them. It is said that the Sanhedrin sat in a circle, or a semi-circle. **By what power—in the exercise of what sort of power?** Physical strength or efficacy is meant. Medical or magical power, or do you pretend to some superhuman strength? **In what sort of name—**Jewish exorcists and enchanters used the name of God and other names in their arts—**Have ye, or, did you do this miracle?** **You** is emphatic and used somewhat contemptuously. They do not ask for information, for they knew that Peter had affirmed that they had performed the cure in the name of Jesus. (3 : 6, 16; 4 : 2.) A judicial examination would naturally go back to the very beginning. They doubtless hoped to catch hold of the words of their confession, so as to make some charge of heresy, or blasphemy, or rebellion, or treason. Or failing in these, they may have hoped to frighten the apostles to retract or modify their claim.

8. Through the aid of the Holy Spirit Peter so answers the Jewish rulers as to frustrate their designs. **Filled with,** etc. The Holy Spirit comes upon him with special power, and Christ's promise is fulfilled in him. (Luke 12 : 11, 12.) **Ye rulers,** etc. He gives due honor to them and their office. **Of Israel** is wanting in several of the oldest and

best manuscripts. *Rulers and elders* here describe the Sanhedrin as a whole. (Ver. 5 : 3 : 17.)

9. The reply of Peter shows tact, wisdom, and courage. To his faith he added vigor. (2 Peter 1 : 5.) **If,** in point of meaning, is equivalent to *since*, but the sentence is rhetorical, and its force does not come at once into view. *If* it be true, and confessedly it is true. **We** is emphatic. Meyer calls it the emphasis of surprise. **This day** adds to the force of thought, such a day as this, when we are to be judicially examined—called to an account, concerning a good deed to an impotent man. Surely the law is for the wicked, and courts of justice are not to try deeds of kindness. (Rom. 13 : 3.) We are reminded of our Lord's reply, "Many good works have I showed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?" (John 10 : 32.)

By what means—in the exercise of what power or in what name. (Ver. 7, 10.) **He—this one,** the man upon whom the miracle had been performed was present. (Ver. 14.) He had been either detained, or summoned, as necessary to make the investigation complete. **Is—has been—made whole.** The word in its widest sense means saved from all evil, spiritual as well as natural. The preceding narrative and the connection limit it here to the cure effected on the lame man. "Bodily health is, as it were, a type and mirror of spiritual health." (BENGEL.) The sentence is completed in the next verse.

10. Peter increases in boldness, and states the truth with great pungency. **Unto you all, and to all the people.** He recognizes them as the representatives of Israel, and through them would speak to the whole people of that which was of great national concern. He introduces it solemnly and formally, **Be it known—a favorite expression with Luke.** (2 : 14; 13 : 38; 28 : 28.) **By, in, the name—in the power of him whom the name repre-**

ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, *even* by him doth this man stand
 11 here before you whole. * This is 'the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become P the head of the corner'

12 (Ps. 118 : 22.) † Neither is their salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

9 Isa. 28 : 16; Luke 20 : 17.

† Eph. 2 : 20-22.

9 Matt. 1 : 21; John 14 : 6; 1 Cor. 3 : 11; 1 Tim. 2 : 5, 6; Heb. 2, 3.

sents. Notice how fully he gives the name: **Jesus—the Saviour—Christ—the Messiah—of Nazareth, or the Nazarene**, the despised. (3:6.) He adds descriptive epithets: crucified by them, but raised from the dead by God. (2:23, 24; 3:14, 15.) Peter thus reminds them of their crime, and of the high dignity of Jesus. **By him—in this name**, or rather *in this one*, in the exercise of his power. **Doth this man—**who had been a cripple from birth—**stand here before you**, a monument and witness of superhuman power. **Whole**—sound and in full health, as they themselves could see. Thus he arraigns his accusers, proclaims the Messiahship of Jesus, attested by a miracle which they could not deny, and in accordance with prophecy (next verse). Like Jesus, he makes bodily healing a text for proclaiming the gospel salvation. (Matt. 9 : 6.)

11. This—he is the stone, Jesus Christ, the leading subject of the discourse. The words used are from Ps. 118 : 22. It appears like a proverbial expression. *The stone* points to something well known, naturally to the prophecy. Jesus quoted it and applied it to himself. (Matt. 21 : 42; Luke 20 : 17.) Compare note on latter passage. **Set at nought**—despising it and making no account of it, it was rejected, cast aside. **Of you the builders**—applied to the Jewish rulers, who had been officially the regularly constituted builders of the spiritual house of God. **Is become—was made**, by God's purposes, and through the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ. (2:23-36; 5:29-31.) **The head of the corner**—the corner stone, which lies at the foundation of the building, where the two walls come together, binding them firmly, and giving support and strength. Thus Jesus, whom the Jewish rulers had despised and rejected, God had made the corner-stone of his spiritual temple, the great foundation of eternal life. (Rom. 9 : 33; 1

Cor. 3 : 11; Eph. 2 : 20-22.) Peter thus shows that both Christ's rejection by them and his exaltation were in fulfillment of prophecy. In his first Epistle (2:6) Peter applies substantially the same figure to Christ, "the chief corner stone," quoting from Isa. 28 : 16.

12. Peter now drops the figure, and gives a practical conclusion. **Salvation**—rather, *the salvation*, which comes through the Messiah and which the gospel brings. The definite article points to the salvation as known to his hearers, and promised through the Messiah, who had been mentioned in the preceding verses. (13:26, 47; Isa. 9 : 6.) The reference cannot be limited to the cure of the lame man. Both what precedes and what follows show that it is the Messianic salvation among men, which Jesus himself proclaimed and the apostles preached. (Heb. 2:3.) **Neither . . . in any other person.** Peter had proclaimed Jesus as the Christ through whom the lame man had been made whole. Having passed to the general Messianic character of Jesus, he now adds that there is no salvation outside of him. **For** introduces the reason—no other Saviour had been provided. **None other name** (ver. 10) **under heaven**—in all the earth. **Given**—by God, from whom alone salvation must come. **Among men**—among whom the saving benefits are to be known and enjoyed. Notice Peter does not limit it to the Jews. **Whereby**—in which name, believing, confessing, and through the exercise of his power. **We must be saved.** Peter puts himself with the crucifiers of the Lord, as fellow-sinners, needing salvation, and only saved through Jesus Christ. **Must** indicates necessity according to the divine purpose in providing the way of salvation. They must be saved through Christ, if saved at all. See 1 Peter 2 : 4-10, where the same truths, as in these verses, are taught more fully: Believers on the one hand

13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John,[†] and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.
14 And beholding the man which was healed

standing with them, they could say nothing against it. But[‡] when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, saying,[§] What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath

[†] Matt. 11 : 25 ; 1 Cor. 1 : 27.

[‡] ch. 26 : 31. [§] John 11 : 47.

are admitted to the highest blessing through their union with Christ; but all rejecters of the gospel are given over by God's appointment to ruin. (John 3 : 18-21 ; 2 Thess. 1 : 8.) Salvation begins in this life and is perfected in the next. It is sometimes spoken of as a present possession (John 10 : 3), and sometimes as yet future. (Rom. 5 : 10.) Peter here, in addressing the unregenerate, speaks of a salvation which they might enjoy now, and which consists in a change of heart, pardon of sin, and reconciliation with God. In his Epistles, in writing to his brethren who had suffered persecutions and various trials, while not overlooking salvation as a present possession, he especially views it as a crowning blessing at the end of their conflict. (1 Peter 1 : 8 ; 2 : 2 ; 5 : 4.)

13. The effect on the Sanhedrin. They wonder and are perplexed. (See 13 : 41.) **They saw**—they *beheld*—implying attention and consideration. **The boldness**—the *freedom* of speech. They did not have that hesitation in speaking which indicated timidity, but that courageous freedom which was born of trust in God. It would appear that John also freely uttered words of assent to what Peter had said. **Perceived**—taking note, now and before, of their manner, language, and pronunciation. **Unlearned**—*illiterate*. The epistles of Peter and John show that they could read and write. The meaning is that they were unversed in the learning of the Jewish schools. They were not of the educated class. **Ignorant**—*private or obscure* men of the common people. (1 Cor. 1 : 27.) They were of low social position. **They marvelled**—so they did at Jesus. (John 7 : 15.) **They took knowledge**—they *recognized* who they were, that *they were* accustomed to be *with Jesus*. Some of the council would probably recollect the features of the apostles. Their Galilean speech also might *indicate* them. John

also had been known to the high priest. (John 18 : 15.) Their freedom, courage, and boldness of speech reminded them of their great teacher, under whose instruction they had been. "Their astonishment sharpened now their recollection." (MEYER.) What a contrast in Peter? At the trial of Jesus, he cowardly denied his Lord before a maid; now he glories in Jesus before the highest Jewish tribunal.

14. While all engaged in considering Peter and John, turning their eyes, they see (a momentary act) the man that had been healed **standing** with the apostles, erect like other men, an evidence to the miraculous cure. It would seem that the healed man had been arrested with the two apostles, and brought with them. The wrath of the rulers may have been upon him, just as upon Lazarus whom they planned to put to death. (John 12 : 10.) **They could say nothing against it**—to what Peter and John had said and to the reality of the miracle. Indeed, they privately acknowledge the miracle. (Ver. 16.)

15. Commanded them to go aside—so as not to hear their discussions. So Gamaliel, at a later trial, commanded to put forth the apostles a little while, when he wished to advise and caution the Sanhedrin. (5 : 34.) This was no disrespect to the prisoners, but an expedient for free discussion and making up a verdict. On **council**, see on 5 : 21. **They conferred among themselves**—compared opinions, and discussed the matter. The substance of their deliberations is given in the next two verses. The court sat with open doors, so that it could be known what was said. Saul of Tarsus may have been present. Afterward a great company of the priests, some of whom were doubtless present, were obedient to the faith. (6 : 7.)

16. What shall we do to these

been done by them *is* manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny *it*. But that it spread no further among the people, let us straitly threaten them, *that they speak henceforth* to no man in this name. *And they called them, and commanded them not*

to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus.

19 But Peter and John answered, and said unto them, *Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you* more than unto God, judge ye. *For we*

^u ch. 3 : 9, 10.

^{*} ch. 5 : 40.

⁷ ch. 5 : 29; Dan. 3 : 18; 6 : 10, 11.

² ch. 17 : 16, 17; 18 : 5;

Num. 22 : 38; 1 Kings 22 : 14.

men, to restrain them and stop the progress of the cause of Jesus. The leaders of Judaism are at a loss how to deal with two fishermen about the healing of a poor cripple! The trouble is: A well-known miracle has been performed by these men, all Jerusalem was aware of it, and they could not deny it. **Miracle, etc.—sign has been done by (through) them.** They concede *evidence* of wonderful power *through* them. (See John 2 : 11, note.) **We cannot deny it**—though they would, if they could only have explained it at all plausibly to the people. (Matt. 28 : 12-15.)

17. But that it—the report of the miracle, and as a result the teaching and doctrines of which it was a *sign* or evidence. The rulers feared lest they lose their spiritual authority over the people, and they suffer for their murder of Jesus. (5 : 28.) **Straitly** or *strictly* is wanting in the oldest manuscripts, and omitted by the highest critical authorities. **That they speak henceforth to no man, etc.** The prohibition is absolute and universal. They were never to speak to any one in or upon the name of Jesus, making him the subject or basis of discourse.

18. They called them, who were waiting for the decision of the Sanhedrin, not knowing whether it would be imprisonment, scourging, or liberty. Now ends their suspense. **Commanded them.** Notice that the charge is in some respects fuller than in the preceding verse: not to speak at all, nor to teach in, or *upon* the name of Jesus. They were not in their public speaking and instructions to introduce the name of Jesus, appeal to his authority or commands.

19. The answer of Peter and John was manly, heroic, Christlike. **Whether it be right.** It was with them a matter of conscience and duty,

In the sight of God, who seeth not as man seeth, and who judgeth righteously. (1 Sam. 16 : 7; Jer. 11 : 20.) **To hearken**—to hear, consider, and obey. **More than**—*rather than to God*. One or the other must be disobeyed. **Judge ye**, for yourselves. We ought to do as we have been doing, "even our enemies themselves being judges." Even the enlightened heathen recognized the truthfulness of the principle underlying the position taken by Peter and John. Parallels have been cited from Herodotus and Livy. The finest is in the apology of Socrates as recorded by Plato: "O ye Athenians, I embrace and love you; but I will obey God rather than you; and if you would dismiss me, and spare my life, on condition that I should cease to teach my fellow citizens, I would rather die a thousand times than accept the proposal." In 2 Mace. ch. 7, is recorded the cruel death of seven sons for their heroic fidelity to God's law. One of them expresses the feelings of the rest, saying: "We are ready to die rather than to transgress the laws of our fathers." Inspiration has given us the noble example of the three young Hebrews, who, threatened with the burning fiery furnace, answered, "Be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." (Dan. 3 : 18.) Surely the Sanhedrin must have felt that the apostles placed themselves on a principle which was sustained by reason, conscience, and the example of their fathers.

20. Whatever the decision of the Sanhedrin, Peter and John must follow their convictions. The reason is given. **For we cannot, etc.**—*for it is morally impossible for us not to speak the things which we saw and heard*, the deeds and works of Jesus. Jeremiah (20 : 9) felt

cannot but speak the things which ^a we have seen and heard.

21 So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, ^b because of the people: for all men glorified God for

22 that which was done. For the man was above forty years old, on whom this miracle of healing was showed.

23 And being let go, ^c they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto

^a 1 John 1 : 1, 3. ^b ch. 5 : 26; Matt. 21 : 26; Luke 20 : 6, 19; 22 : 2. ^c ch. 12 : 12.

the same constraining power: "There is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with forbearing, and I cannot contain."

In his second epistle (1:16-18), Peter refers to their being "eye witnesses of his majesty," and hearing a voice from "the majestic glory." John also in his first epistle (1:1) speaks of that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we beheld and our hands have handled concerning the Word of life." Peter displays the same courage, mellowed by age and trial, in his epistles. (1 Peter 3:15; 4:19; 5:9; 2 Peter 2:2-22.) John is the same son of thunder which he had been, and which he continued to be to the end. (Luke 9:54; 1 John 2:4.) The conduct of the apostles is consistent with Peter's exhortation: "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man," every human institution connected with human government, "for the Lord's sake." (1 Peter 2:13.) With Paul, Peter regarded civil government as of divine appointment. (Rom. 13:1-7.) But he also recognized duty to God as well: "Honor all men, love the brotherhood; fear God; honor the king." (1 Peter 2:17.) Hence when government left its legitimate work of punishing evil-doers and praising those that did well (1 Peter 2:11), and infringed upon the rights of conscience, he recognized a higher law and affirmed: "We ought to obey God rather than men," and patiently suffered the consequences. "For this is acceptable, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully." (1 Peter 2:19. See 1 Peter 3:14-17.)

21. Further threatened them—having added threatenings to those proposed in ver. 17, and doubtless given with the command in ver. 18. **Finding nothing how—**finding no way to punish them without stirring up the people. (See 2:47.) **For all glorified God, etc.** They saw the power of God in the miracle and they were praising

God for it. To them it was a sign of a risen Jesus, and of the good news preached by the apostles. "Often the people are more reasonable than their rulers." (BENGEL.)

22. For introduces the special reason why the people were glorifying God; the healing was performed upon a man over forty years old. It was an inveterate infirmity, incurable by human means and widely known. (3:2) **This miracle, etc.—**this sign of the healing. Notice how the evidential character of the miracle is kept in view. Like the blind man in John 9, the name of this man is not given. But the purpose was not to immortalize a human name, but to witness to and glorify the name of Jesus.

23-31. THE RELEASE OF THE APOSTLES AND THE UNITED PRAISE AND PRAYER OF THE CHURCH. (Ps. 2:1, 2, 14:6.) Their release occasions renewed praise to God among the disciples (ver. 23-24), who perceive the prediction of David (Ps. 2:1, 2) fulfilled by the enemies of Christ (ver. 25-28), and are encouraged to pray for greater courage and greater power in working miraculous signs (ver. 29, 30); which prayer was at once granted. (Ver. 31.)

23. They went to their own company, or friends. The expression is general, and is not necessarily limited to their fellow apostles, or to the believers who resided with them, nor extended to the whole body of believers, who were doubtless too many to be assembled in any one place. They went to their brethren, either calling them together, so far as convenient, and reported to them; or, more probably, they were gathered together in some place, a company of disciples, praying for them, as in 12:12. (See on ver. 31.) The account that follows most naturally implies that the report was made to an assembly of believers, who united in praise and prayer. The Sanhedrin is here indicated by *chief priests* and

24 them. And when they heard that, ^d they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, ^e thou art God, which hath made heaven, and earth, and

25 the sea, and all that in them is: who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, ^f Why did the heathen rage, and 26 the people imagine vain things? The

^d Ps. 62: 5-8; Jer. 20: 13.

^e 2 Kings 19: 15.

^f Ps. 2: 1-6.

elders. (Ver. 1.) **Chief priests**—in the original the plural of high priest; the word has been variously applied to the heads of the twenty-four classes of the priesthood, as divided by David (1 Chron. 24: 1-19), or priests appointed over certain parts of the temple service, or to the several high priests who were then living. Recent examinations go to show that neither in the Old Testament (Septuagint Version) nor in Josephus is the word chief priests ever applied to the heads of the twenty-four classes, but that it is limited in its application to those who were high priests, or had been, together with the influential members of families from which the high priests still continued to be selected. (THAYER'S *Greek Lex. of N. T.*)

24. They lifted up their voice to God. This could be said of them, if one led aloud, the others following in their hearts and giving audible assent. (1 Cor. 14: 16.) The language was largely from the Old Testament, and was doubtless so familiar to them that many could with ease join aloud. Moreover, the Spirit may have especially impressed the minds of the whole company with these Scriptures so fitting the occasion, and so suited to their present purpose in prayer. **With one accord**—with one mind, with a union of hearts. (1: 14; 2: 46.) This is the first recorded prayer of believers in the New Testament. Some have supposed, but without sufficient reason, that this was a form of prayer already introduced into the early church and the beginning of a liturgy. But there is no evidence in the New Testament that this or any other form of prayer was used by the early churches. There is no intimation even of the use of the Lord's Prayer. Neither does history record any liturgy in the apostolic church. The prayer is given as an outburst of hearts imbued with the Holy Spirit, fitted to and growing out of this very occasion. **Lord**—*Master, Sovereign*; not the usual word translated Lord, but a word from which

is derived our English word *despot*. It was the correlative of slave, and denoted absolute ownership and uncontrolled power. It is applied twice to Christ (2 Peter 2: 1; Jude 4.) It is here applied to God by those who address him as servants. (Ver. 29.) **Thou art God**, etc. According to the most approved text, *Thou that didst make heaven*, etc. The words are found in Exod. 20: 11; Ps. 146: 6, and they indicate how the minds of the early disciples were filled with Scripture. Paul quotes the same words to the Lycaonians (14: 15), which suggest that it was one of the familiar passages often used from the sacred writings. The disciples adore God as the Almighty Creator, who would protect, against whom all opposition of his creatures must be unsuccessful. (See Neh. 9: 6; Jer. 32: 17; Rev. 14: 7.)

25. By the mouth, etc. The Greek text here is somewhat uncertain. The Revised Version prefers, *Who by the Holy Spirit, through the mouth of our father David, thy servant, didst say.* (Ps. 2: 1, 2.) The quotation is from the Septuagint version. The second Psalm presents the exaltation of Christ and the progress of his kingdom against all opposition. It was then being fulfilled, and its fulfillment is still in progress. The Psalm is without a title, but it is here ascribed to David and applied to Christ. Its Messianic character is recognized by other quotations in the New Testament. (13: 33; Heb. 1: 5; 5: 5.) **Servant**. See on 3: 13, where this word is translated *son* in our Common Version. **The heathen**—*the nations, the Gentiles*. **Rage**—used primarily of the *neighing* and *snorting* of horses; here of *tumultuous*, noisy opposition. **The people**, or *peoples*—the tribes, perhaps including other nations besides the tribes of Israel. **Imagine a vain thing**—devise that which is empty and worthless and which will surely be frustrated.

26. The quotation from the second Psalm continues. **Stood up**—ready

kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ' (Ps. 2 : 1, 2, 27 Sept.) For ^aof a truth against ^bthy holy child Jesus, ^cwhom thou hast anointed both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto

thy servants, ^kthat with all boldness they may speak thy word, by stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done ^lby the name of thy holy child Jesus.

31 And when they had prayed, ^mthe place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

^a Matt. 26 : 3; Luke 22 : 2. ^b ch. 3 : 14; Luke 1 : 35. ^c Ps. 2 : 2, 6; John 10 : 36. ^k ch. 13 : 46; 19 : 8, 26, 26; 28 : 31; Eph. 6 : 19. ^l ch. 3 : 6, 16. ^m ch. 2 : 2, 4; 16 : 26.

for assault. **Were gathered together**—with hostile design, for combined resistance, and answers to *Took counsel together* in Ps. 2 : 2, which would be connected with, and result from, their gathering together. **His Christ**—his anointed, for so the word means. (Matt. 1 : 1 note.)

27. For of a truth—for in fact, justifying this use of the prophecy, and illustrating its application to the circumstances. According to the oldest manuscripts and versions the words *in this city*, should be here supplied. **Thy holy child**, rather, *servant*, the word being the same as that applied to David in ver. 25. (See 3 : 13 note.) **Holy**, in character, and set apart and consecrated to his holy office and work. (John 10 : 36.) **Hast anointed, didst anoint**, by the Holy Spirit, especially at his baptism. (10 : 38; Luke 3 : 21-23; 4 : 18; Isa 61 : 1.) **Both Herod and Pontius Pilate**. Herod Antipas is meant, a son of Herod the Great, tetrarch of Galilee and Perea. (See Luke 23 : 1-12.)

People. The plural is used, *peoples of Israel*, probably referring to the tribes. (ver 25.) "The present prayer of the disciples clearly answers to the second psalm, as a comparison shows; the kings answers to Herod, the rulers to Pontius Pilate, the heathen to the Gentiles, the peoples to the peoples of Israel." (BENGEL.)

28. For to do—not their intention, for their purpose was malicious and destructive. They were unconsciously carrying out God's plan for the salvation of men. God's sovereignty and man's accountability are assumed. (See Gen. 50 : 20.) **Thy hand**—symbol of power. **Counsel**—purpose. (See on 2 : 23.) The disciples regarded them-

selves as inseparably connected with Christ and his cause.

29. And now—respecting present matters. **Lord**—God. (Ver. 24.) **Behold**—look upon their threatenings, that they be not accomplished. **Thy servants**—literally, *slaves*, or *bonds-men*, those sustaining permanent servile relations to another (not the word translated servant in ver. 25), correlative of Lord in ver. 24. *Lord* there and *servants* are used in a strong, good sense, without any idea of oppression on the one hand or of degradation on the other. (16 : 17; 2 Peter 1 : 1.) The apostles and others who preached the word are meant. **With all boldness**—with utmost freedom, implying fearless confidence, as in 4 : 13.

30. By stretching forth thy hand—exerting thy power in healing, thus rendering them courageous. But some, with the Revised Version, translate, *While thou stretchest forth thy hand to heal*, confirming their courageous preaching by attendant miracles. **By, through**, by means of the name. **Holy child**, or *servant*, Jesus. (See on ver 27.) **Signs and wonders**. (See on 2 : 22.) There was need of these to prove the truth of apostolic preaching and the resurrection of Jesus.

31. The answer to their prayer comes speedily. The place was shaken—as with an earthquake (Exod. 19 : 18; Ps 68 : 8), **where they were assembled**, showing that there was a gathering of the disciples (ver. 23) in some customary place, perhaps in the upper room. (1 : 13.) **Filled with the Holy Spirit**. The Holy Spirit had come on the day of Pentecost. It is not a new coming; but this presence and power are manifested in them in large meas-

The united and mutual love of the disciples, and the liberality of Barnabas and others.

32 And the multitude of them that believed ^awere of one heart and of one soul: ^bneither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. And with ^cgreat power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of

the Lord Jesus; and ^da great grace was 34 upon them all. Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, ^eand laid them 35 down at the apostles' feet: ^fand distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.

^a Ezek. 11 : 19; Rom. 15 : 5, 6; 2 Cor. 13 : 11; Eph. 4 : 2-6; Phil. 1 : 27; 2 : 2; 1 Peter 3 : 8.
^b ch. 2 : 44, 45. ^c 1 Thess. 1 : 5. ^d ch. 2 : 47. ^e ch. 5 : 2. ^f ch. 2 : 45; 6 : 1.

ure. They receive spiritual power for their work, and they are enabled to speak the word of God freely and courageously. Not the apostles alone, but all enjoy this blessing.

It may be worthy of note that *Disciples, Master* (ver. 24), is used, aside from Paul (1 Tim. 6 : 1; 2 Tim. 2 : 21; Tit. 2 : 9), only by Luke (2 : 29), Peter, and Jude. (2 Peter 2 : 1; Jude 4.) The exhortation of the latter is of interest here (Jude 20) : "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." James lays special stress on prayer. (James 1 : 5; 5 : 13-18.) Both James and Jude may have been present at this time and learned new lessons on unity and prayer.

32-37. THE UNITED AND PROSPEROUS CONDITION OF THE CHURCH, AND THE LIBERality OF THE WEALTHIER BRETHREN.

These verses should be compared with 2 : 42-47. As after the great Pentecostal ingathering the spiritual and social church life is described, so here, after another great increase of disciples and a signal victory over the Sanhedrin, a similar state of things is described. The latter shows some advance on the former. Both descriptions together present the condition of the church at Jerusalem up to the arrest and martyrdom of Stephen. This also prepares the way for the account of the liberality of Barnabas and the dying covetousness of Ananias and Sapphira.

32. **The multitude of them that believed**—not merely the new converts, but the church at large. **Were of one heart and of one soul**—in sympathy, affection, fellow-

ship, and spiritual interest. The mind that was in Christ was in them. This union of hearts showed itself practically. **Neither said any of them, etc.** Not one was disposed to speak of his possessions as his own, but treated them as if they belonged to the church at large. (See Rom. 12 : 9-13.) **They had all things common.** They possessed property and did not renounce it, but used it in common for the good of the brethren, especially of those who had need. (Ver. 35.) They were inspired with their oneness in Christ and with their consequent oneness in interests. (See note on 2 : 45.)

33. With unity of love, fervency of prayer, and generous liberality, their preaching was effective, and the favor of God largely attended them. **With great power**—a result of the Holy Spirit (ver. 31) manifested in powerful preaching and in attendant miracles. **Gave the apostles witness**—by testifying that they had seen the risen Lord, by quoting the prophets, and by signs evidencing the truthfulness of their preaching. **To the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.** The great theme of their preaching. They did not wait for Easter Sunday, but daily proclaimed the fact. (2 : 28, 32; 3 : 26; 10 : 39, 40; 13 : 30-37; 17 : 31, 32; 26 : 23.) **Great grace.** Some regard it as the favor of the people as in 2 : 47. It is more natural in this connection to understand it as the favor of God. And in thus preaching effectually they would also enjoy much favor from men. (Luke 2 : 52.) **Upon them**—with the idea of resting upon them as the dove rested on Jesus. **All**—not the apostles only, but all the believers.

34, 35. These two verses form one sentence. **Neither . . . For**—intro-

36 And **Joses**, who by the apostles was surnamed **Barnabas**, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a

Levite, and of the country of Cyprus, 37 ^ahaving land, sold *it*, and brought the money, and laid *it* at the apostles' feet.

^c ch. 11 : 22-25, 30; 13 : 1; Gal. 2 : 9. ^a Matt. 19 : 29.

ducing the proof of grace resting upon all. The favor of God and the consequent favor of men were shown by the practical exhibition of beneficence, so that *there was no one among them that lacked*. There was not a poor or destitute person. **Lands or fields**, probably in the country. The same word in 1 : 18. **Houses**—perhaps in the city. **Sold them**. This describes what they were wont to do. It implies that they had possessions, but not that they sold all they had. **Laid them at the apostles' feet**—placing their offering at the disposal of the apostles. "They intimated that the apostles, under the guidance of divine wisdom, should have all the control over their property." (BENGEL.) The amount received for property sold was brought and placed at the feet of the apostles, as they sat teaching, or as teachers. (Matt. 5 : 1.) At the beginning of this common distribution nothing is said of the apostles taking part in the work (2 : 42); it was probably done by volunteers, but as the disciples increased, and the work grew, it appears that the apostles found it necessary to take charge of the matter. (6 : 2-4.) **Distribution . . . as each had need**. There was not a general and miscellaneous distribution, but a liberal supply to those who needed it. (2 : 45.)

36. The self-sacrifice and mutual liberality of the disciples are illustrated by a noted example, followed by one of an opposite character in the next chapter. **And**—in accordance with what had been just stated of believers in general. **Joses**—better *Joseph*. **By the apostles was surnamed**—because of certain ability and spiritual power. **Barnabas**—*a son of exhortation*, one gifted in teaching, admonishing, and consoling. (Rom. 12 : 8; 1 Thess. 2 : 3.) He was a distinguished Christian teacher, and afterward became the companion and colleague of Paul. (9 : 27; 11 : 22, 30; 12 : 25; 13-15; 1 Cor. 9 : 6; Gal. 2 : 1, 9, 13; Col. 4 : 10.) **A Levite**—though probably not a priest, or descendant of Aaron.

Cyprus—a large and fertile island, situated in the northeast corner of the Mediterranean Sea. It was settled by Kittim the son of Javan. (Gen. 10 : 4.) It was one of the many countries into which the Jews were scattered.

37. **Having land**. The tribe of Levi did not share in the original distribution of the land. (Num. 18 : 20-24; Josh. 18 : 7.) But this did not seem to exclude them from ownership in the forty-eight cities and suburbs allotted to them. (Josh. 21 : 3 f.) And later, individual Levites could hold property. Jeremiah, the son of a priest, purchased a field as private property, according to the forms of law. (Jer. 1 : 1; 32 : 9.) This instance of Barnabas is mentioned, probably because of his eminent usefulness; the important position he occupies in the book of Acts; and as contrasting strikingly with Ananias and Sapphira. (5 : 1.) It also tends to show that such acts of benevolence were voluntary. Some suppose that the land sold was in Cyprus. It is a wonderful example of a wealthy Levite giving up his property to the disposal of poor men. How unwilling a Jew was to sell his inheritance may be seen in the case of Naboth. (1 Kings 21 : 1-3.) By this act Barnabas evinced his entire consecration to God, and that "he was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith." (11 : 24.)

PRACTICAL REMARKS.

1. If trials and opposition must come, let them find us in the path of duty. (Ver. 1; 1 Peter 4 : 15-19.)
2. Grief because the gospel is preached indicates a depraved heart. (Ver. 2; Ps. 112 : 10.)
3. Preaching the gospel in face of opposition evinces sincerity, and generally reaches the heart. (Ver. 3, 4; Jer. 20 : 8, 9, 11.)
4. "Men may bind the preacher, but the word cannot be bound." (Ver. 4; 2 Tim. 2 : 9.)
5. Persecution generally reveals its own

wickedness, and in the end advances the truth. (Ver. 4; Ps. 76: 10.)

6. The opposers of Christ will leave no means untried to injure his cause. (Ver. 5, 6; Rev. 12: 12.)

7. None are so blind as those who will not see. Notwithstanding the miracle and the presence of the man healed, the Jewish rulers ask the apostles their authority. (Ver. 7; 2 Thess. 3: 2.)

8. Men who are in the right can afford to be respectful and give to every man his due. (Ver. 8; 1 Peter 2: 13-16.)

9. The once vacillating and denying Simon is now the bold and courageous Peter. Nothing but the presence of the Spirit, and a consciousness of a living Christ could have accomplished this. (Ver. 10)

10. There are many builders, yet none build aright but those who build on Jesus Christ. (Ver. 11; ch. 10: 42, 43.)

11. Salvation in none other! Unbelievers need to tremble and believers rejoice. Surely Jesus should be proclaimed to all nations. (Ver. 12; 10: 42, 43.)

12. Successful preaching depends more upon a deep experience and honest convictions of the truth, than upon natural endowments, learning, and arts of eloquence. (Ver. 13; 1 Cor. 1: 23, 24.)

13. Opposers to Christ are often silenced, but not always convinced. (Ver. 14; 19: 36-41.)

14. Let us be so acquainted with Jesus that his Spirit shall be manifested in our whole deportment. (Ver. 14; 1 Cor. 14: 25.)

15. Darkness cannot stand the light, nor falsehood before the truth. (Ver. 15; John 3: 20, 21.)

16. Wicked men continue to oppose the gospel, even when aware that the evidences are all against them. (Ver. 16; 13: 8.)

17. What they cannot deny or destroy, they endeavor to hinder. (Ver. 17, 18; 18: 45.)

18. Every one has the right of private judgment and the liberty of conscience, subject only to God. (Ver. 19, 20; Rom. 14: 3.)

19. We are under no obligation to obey human laws which require us to disobey God. (Ver. 19, 20; 5: 29; Dan. 3: 18; Matt. 16: 37, 38.)

20. The miracles of the New Testament were strongly attested, and acknowledged by all classes. (Ver. 21, 22; John 11: 47-52.)

21. Christians naturally seek their own brethren, and among them find comfort and encouragement in trials. (Ver. 23; Phil. 1: 7; 1 Thess. 3: 6, 7.)

22. Trials teach the Christian both to praise and pray. (Ver. 24; 5: 41; 16: 25.)

23. We should plead the word and promises of God in prayer. (Ver. 25; Dan. 9: 2, 3.)

24. He that opposes Christ opposes God. (Ver. 26; Luke 10: 16; Heb. 1: 3.)

25. Christianity has been opposed by the wicked of all ages, and that it still survives is an evidence of its divine origin. (Ver. 27; Ps. 2: 8, 9.)

26. For the wisest and best of reasons God suffers the wicked to oppose and obstruct his cause, which he overrules for the highest good of his people. (Ver. 28; Rom. 8: 28.)

27. God's sovereignty and man's freedom and responsibility are great truths taught in life and by Scripture. (Ver. 28; Dan. 4: 34, 35; Prov. 9: 12.)

28. Preachers of the gospel need wisdom, faithfulness, and boldness in proclaiming the truth. (Ver. 29; Eph. 6: 19.)

29. We should be more anxious for the presence and power of Christ with his word, than for our own personal safety. (Ver. 30; 20: 22-24.)

30. The path of duty is ultimately the path of safety. God will take care of those who commit themselves to him. (Ver. 31; Ps. 46: 1.)

31. The true unity of the church is in love and in the truth. (Ver. 32; John 17: 17, 20, 21.)

32. Great blessings rest upon those who are united in Christ's service and work. (Ver. 33; Matt. 18: 20.)

33. Love to Christ and to the brethren will be manifested, not in words only, but also in deeds. (Ver. 34; Gal. 6: 10; 1 John 3: 18.)

34. Every Christian, like Barnabas, should be a son of consolation to the inquiring sinner, to the poor, and to the sorrowing saint. (Ver. 35-37; Isa. 40: 1; 2 Cor. 1: 4.)

The sin of Ananias and Sapphira. Great increase of the church.

5 But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession,

* 1 Tim. 6 : 10. † Matt. 6 : 2, 3. ‡ Num. 30 : 2; Deut. 23 : 21; Eccl. 5 : 4. § Luke 22 : 3; John 8 : 44.

2 and ^a kept back *part* of the price, his wife also being privy to it, [†] and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' [‡] feet. [§] But Peter said, Ananias, why hath ^a Satan filled thine heart ^b to lie to the

Ch. 5 : 1-16. THE COVETOUSNESS AND FALSEHOOD OF ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA. GOD'S JUDGMENT UPON THEM. GREAT INCREASE OF THE CHURCH. The time of these occurrences was most probably A. D. 32. The prosperous condition of the church described in 4 : 32-35 most likely continued several months, perhaps a year or two.

1. But introduces a contrast to the closing incident of the preceding chapter. The division of the chapters are here infelicitous, and many readers thereby fail to discover the connection. The first recorded shadow falls upon the early church-life. What at first was the voluntary impulse of glowing love to Christ and the brethren, is made an occasion of hypocritical imitation. **Ananias**—meaning *Jehovah is gracious*. With indicates that their action was preconcerted as expressed in the next verse. **Sapphira**—meaning, according to the Aramean, *beautiful*, or according to Greek, *Sapphire*. "Their names were favorable and beautiful; their principles bad." (BENGEL.) **A possession**—defined as a *land* or *field* in ver. 3. It is not stated whether this was all of his property or only a part.

2. Kept back, etc.—purloined, embezzled from the price. So used in Titus 2 : 10, the only instance in the New Testament, outside of this passage, where the word is found. In the Septuagint the word is used in the case of Achan. (Josh. 7 : 1.) It was not a mere keeping back, but it was a keeping back with the intent to conceal, and to deliberately act out a lie. **His wife also being privy to it**—*being aware of it*, thus consenting and in collusion with him. The sin was deliberate and planned; and was thus the more aggravated. **Brought a certain part**—pretending that it was the whole. Bengel thinks that he brought the larger part; but J. A. Alexander lays

stress on a more exact rendering, *some part*, and suggests that he reserved the larger part for himself, which perhaps is the more probable. The character of the moral act was the same in either case. It is very probable that Ananias intended to give the whole when he sold the land, but that when he saw the money the love of it led him to reserve a portion for his own use. (1 Tim. 6 : 10.) He wished, however, to appear to the apostles and to the whole church, as disinterested and self-denying as Barnabas and others. In him avarice, hypocrisy, and lying unite. **At the apostles' feet.** It would seem that this was done at a religious service (ver. 5, 11) and as a religious offering. This was the notoriety Ananias desired. It was not only hypocrisy before men, but a lie to the Holy Spirit. (Ver. 3.) It was a sin which, if permitted, would result in spiritual disaster to the church, and was especially heinous to God. The punishment must be immediate and effectual. (See the case of Achan, Josh. 6 : 17-19; 7 : 1, 15.)

3. Peter speaks in behalf of the apostles at whose feet the gift had been placed. (Ver. 2.) His inspiration is indicated in his address, and his power of discerning of spirits. (1 Cor. 12 : 10; 1 John 4 : 1.) **Satan** means *adversary*, and is used as a proper name of the prince of fallen angels. (Job 1 : 7; Rev. 12 : 9, 10.) He is also the great tempter of men. (Mark 8 : 33; 2 Cor. 11 : 2.) The form of the question, **Why**, implies freedom of action, and that Ananias ought to have resisted the temptation. "Why did you permit Satan," etc. (See James 4 : 7.) **Filled thine heart**—so as to take full possession of it. Why did Satan *possess* thy heart? "Satan's fullness of heart is the highest grade of wickedness." (BENGEL.) **To lie to the Holy Spirit.** The word *lie* here means to play false, to *deceive* by acting out or uttering a falsehood. Ananias

Holy Spirit, and to keep back *part* of the
4 price of the land? Whiles it remained,
was it not thine own? And after it was
sold, was it not in thine own power? Why

hast thou conceived this thing in thine
heart? ^cThou hast not lied unto men,
5 ^dbut unto God. And Ananias hearing

^c Exod. 16 : 8; see refs. Luke 10 : 16.

^d See ver. 3.

acted a lie, though it does not certainly appear that he uttered one. He is said to have lied to the Holy Spirit, because the apostles were inspired by, and possessed with, the gifts and powers of the Spirit; because the church was the temple of God, filled with the Holy Spirit; and because he professed to be moved by the Spirit to do an act of self-sacrifice, when he only wished to "make a fair show in the flesh." The Spirit may have moved him to a course of beneficence in response to which he sold and devoted the property, and then proved false by secretly withholding a part, and hypocritically pretending to give the whole. **To keep back**—*to purloin*, the same as in ver. 2. "Possession" (ver. 1) is here specified as **land**, *a field or piece of ground*, probably in the country. (1:34.)

4. While it remained, etc., when it remained did it not remain thine? The form of the question is one which would be followed by an affirmative answer. **Was it not in thy own power**—at thy discretion to do with the money as it pleased thee? Ananias acted freely and was not under obligation to do it. God had not commanded it, nor had the apostles demanded it. It is evident that the community of goods was not compulsory; neither was it universal among the disciples, nor absolute. The natural inference from the language also is, that he had not devoted the land to God before he sold it, nor the whole price of it till after he had received it. **Why hast thou—how is it that thou didst put this thing in thy heart.** Ananias did it deliberately. He was not responsible for the suggestion of Satan (Matt. 4:3, 6, 9), but for taking hold of the suggestion, harboring it in his heart and acting upon it. **Thou hast not lied, etc.** Peter does not deny that Ananias had lied to men, but he emphasizes the sin as against God (See Ps. 51:4.) His lying to God was so heinous that his lying to Peter and the apostles was hardly to be

thought of, or mentioned, at the same time. Notice that the *Holy Spirit* and *God* are used interchangeably, a strong proof of the divinity of the Holy Spirit. It is also implied that Peter's knowledge of Ananias' heart and the nature of his sin was not from any information obtained from others, but through the inspiration of the Spirit. "These modern sins of our plausible Christian society,—profits made, fortunes realized, reputation inflated, by means that will not bear scrutiny,—all having their cankered root in the desire to *seem* rather than to *be*, to seem righteous in the world's eye,—is it not well for us to see them in the burning light of an apostle's indignation?" (J. P. NORRIS, D. D.)

5. Ananias hearing . . . fell down and gave up the ghost—literally, *breathed out his soul or life*. This was evidently a direct judgment from God. There is nothing to indicate that Ananias died from the sudden shock produced by Peter's rebuke. Both Simon Magus (8:20-21) and Elymas the sorcerer (13:9-11) were more fearfully rebuked without physical injury; for no one would say the rebuke of Paul blinded Elymas. Peter pronounced no sentence upon Ananias, and there is no evidence that he expected his death. He foretold the death of Sapphira, but he did this by inspiration, after he saw what the purpose of God was in punishing the sin. Yet it is entirely consistent with superhuman power, that God acted through the senses and the mind. It was upon *hearing* his terrible sin that Ananias fell down and died. The punishment was deserved. The wages of sin is death, temporal and eternal. Lying to the Holy Spirit is the most aggravated of all lying. (See Matt. 12:31, 32.) And this sin was complicated with avarice, pride, selfishness, and hypocrisy. The punishment too was necessary, at the beginning of the Christian Dispensation, to deter others from repeating the offence. Severe

these words ^e fell down, and gave up the ghost. And great fear came on all them ⁶ that heard these things. And the young

men arose, ^f wound him up, and carried *him* out, and buried *him*.

7 And it was about the space of three

^e Jer. 5 : 14.

^f John 19 : 40.

punishment upon first transgressors acts as a solemn and merciful warning to others. So it was under the Old Dispensation. Thus God signally punished Cain (Gen. 4 : 11-15), the profaner of the Sabbath (Num. 15 : 32-36), Korah and his company (Num. 16 : 31-35), Nadab and Abiha (Lev. 10 : 1, 2), and Uzzah (2 Sam. 6 : 6, 7). The same principle holds true in human government. At one time many hundreds were lost yearly by duels in France. Richelieu revived an old law and gave notice that the practice would be punished with death. Two noblemen fought; he hanged both; and a stop was put to duelling while he lived. Thus by the death of two men he saved many thousands to France. **Great fear**—terror and awe at the majesty of God, and a terrible sense of the danger of offending him. Sudden death in connection with crime is especially fitted to affect the mind. How much more so when death comes manifestly as a divine judgment. This was especially true of Ananias' death, as it was sudden, and the first infliction from God in the church.

6. The young men—literally, *the younger*, equivalent to attendants, servants. See Luke 22 : 26, where *younger* is used in opposition to *greater*, "he that is greater among you, let him become as the younger." The younger are regarded as inferior to the older. The latter are rather to be waited on, the former should rather serve. There is no evidence that the word here is used to designate an official title of church officers. The younger men are conceived of, as the ones who did various needful things in connection with numerous meetings. "It devolved on them naturally to perform this service, both on account of their greater activity and out of respect to their superiors in age." (HACKETT.) And even more, this was regarded as their appropriate work. They were ready as helpers and for service. See further on ver. 10. **Wound him up, wrapt him up** in grave clothes, or more probably, on

account of the haste with which the burial was performed, in his own garments. "It was customary among the Jews to bury the body in the same garment used in life, or in one resembling it." (ABBOTT.) The Jews used no coffins. **Carried him out**, not merely from the house, but out of the city. (Luke 7 : 12; John 11 : 31-38.) Kings, prophets, and distinguished persons alone were buried within towns.

Buried him. It was customary among the Jews to bury soon after death, generally the same day. This was necessary because in Palestine decomposition takes place very rapidly after death. The extraordinary manner of Ananias' death doubtless hastened the burial. The Jews used vaults, graves dug in the earth, lateral excavations in the hillside, or caverns. At the present day at Jerusalem burial is not generally deferred more than three or four hours. The funeral processions move very rapidly. The three hours mentioned in the next verse was sufficiently long for the young men to attend to the burial. "I stood on the Mount of Olives and watched a funeral procession. The procession was entirely of men, mostly under thirty-five years, and moved at an astonishing, almost a breathless speed. The whole time occupied, from the Jews' quarter in Jerusalem to the burying-ground and back, including the sepulchre, could not have been much more than three-quarters of an hour." (REV. T. A. T. HANNA.)

7. About the space of three hours after . . . came. It is most natural from this language, to suppose that the exercises of the Christian assembly had continued during this whole interval. Many, however, think that Ananias came at one hour of prayer, and Sapphira at the next, which would occur three hours later. **His wife not knowing what was done**—what had occurred in regard to her husband. It is vain to conjecture how she had remained ignorant. It

hours after, when his wife, not knowing
8 what was done, came in. And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea,
9 for so much. Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together
10 to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of them which have buried thy

husband *are* at the door, and shall carry
10 thee out. ¹Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost. And the young men came in and found her dead, and, carrying *her* forth, buried
11 *her* by her husband. ²And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things.

g Prov. 11 : 21.

h Exod. 17 : 2; Matt. 4 : 7.

i ver. 5.

k ch. 2 : 43; 19 : 17.

was of the Lord that she was not told.

8. Answered—perhaps to her salvation, or more probably to her thoughts or looks. (See 4 : 12.) **For so much**—probably naming the sum, and perhaps pointing to the money. She is given an opportunity to retrace and speak the truth with penitence. **Yea, for so much.** She neglects her opportunity for mercy; hardens her heart, and not only acts out, but tells a lie.

9. How is it—Why is it? Agreed together—showing that they had formed their plans deliberately. Hence their sin was the greater. It was not committed hastily nor ignorantly, but presumptuously. **To tempt—try the Spirit** who was in the apostles, as if he might not detect or punish the fraud. "The sin itself is here described as that of tempting God, that is, trying his patience, or putting to the test, and thereby impiously questioning, not merely his omniscience, but his veracity and his power to punish. The term is repeatedly applied to God (Deut. 6 : 16; Matt. 4 : 7; Luke 4 : 12; Heb. 3 : 8, 9) and once to Christ (1 Cor. 10 : 9); but here to *the Spirit of the Lord*, that is, of God, or according to the prevalent New Testament usage, of Christ himself. Paul says, 'God hath sent forth *the Spirit of his Son*.' (Gal. 4 : 6.) See also John 14 : 26; 15 : 26, where the Spirit is said to be sent, not only in the Son's name by the Father, but from the Father by the Son himself. . . . Ananias and Sapphira had conspired to tempt the omniscient Spirit by agreeing to practice a deception on the men in whom he manifestly dwelt in an extraordinary manner, and through whom he now spoke and acted as the ruler and guardian of his infant church." (ALEXANDER.) **Behold** usually introduces something unexpected or surprising, here calls attention to the approaching footsteps. **The**

feet of them . . . at the door. Who had returned from burying her husband, and were about entering the place of meeting. *Feet* is applied to persons or messengers going on foot. (Isa. 52 : 7; Nahum 1 : 15; Rom. 10 : 15.) **Shall carry thee out.** Peter does not pronounce sentence as a judge, but he foretells as an inspired apostle. (See 1 Kings 14 : 5, 6.)

10. Straightway. Her death was instantaneous, *immediately* upon Peter's declaration. **At his feet.** The money had been laid there (ver. 2), and now she dies there. **Yielded up, etc.**—*expired*, the same word as in ver. 5. **The young men**—a different word from that in ver. 6, meaning *youths*, and in colloquial language may be used of *attendants* or *servants*, very much like our colloquial "boys." (See on ver. 6.) **Found her dead.** God arranged that the young men should return at the right moment. **Buried her by her husband.** In life in sin united, in death not divided. Both may have been laid in a family tomb, which Ananias, as a man of property, may have owned.

11. Great fear—great religious awe and dread of God's displeasure and judgment. The same as in ver. 5, and extending not only to the *whole church*, or *congregation* of believers, but also to those outside, who heard these things. This was doubtless one of the things which God intended to accomplish by the death of Ananias and Sapphira. The Greek word *ecclesia*, which is translated *church*, means literally *the called out, an assembly, congregation*. In the New Testament it is used twice for a *lawful assembly* for business. (Acts 19 : 39.) It is twice applied to a tumultuous assembly. (Act. 19 : 32, 41.) It occurs twice in the Jewish sense of a *congregation* convened for sacred purposes. (7 : 35; Heb. 2 : 12.) In all other cases it is

12 And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among

the people. ^m And they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch. And ⁿ of the

^l ch. 14 : 3; Mark 16 : 17, 18; Rom. 15 : 19; 2 Cor. 12 : 12; Heb. 2 : 4.

^m ch. 2 : 42, 46; 3 : 11.

ⁿ John 12 : 42; 19 : 38.

applied, *First*, to the local church, a congregation of believers, organized for worship, observing the ordinances and maintaining discipline among themselves. (11 : 22; 1 Cor. 4 : 17; 6 : 1; 11 : 18; 2 Cor. 8 : 19.) *Second*, The collective body of discipleship, wherever found. (20 : 28; Gal. 1 : 13; Eph. 1 : 22; Col. 1 : 18, 24; 1 Tim. 3 : 15.) In Heb. 12 : 23, *church* appears to be applied to the whole body of believers registered in heaven. The word is never applied in the New Testament to a nation, a family, the eldership, a council, hierarchy, or to a house of worship. (See author's *Notes on Matthew*, 16 : 18. But see also on 9 : 31.)

In regard to the suddenness of the punishment of Ananias and Sapphira, Dr. J. A. Alexander well remarks, "that no man thinks it needful thus to 'vindicate the ways of God to man,' in reference to the multitude of cases, in which unconverted sinners are continually swept into eternity without immediate warning and without repentance." Rev. Lyman Abbott remarks that "the punishment of Ananias and Sapphira contrasts, but does not conflict, with Luke 9 : 53-56; for there the disciples proposed to destroy a village which, ignorant of Christ's true character, refused him hospitality because he was a Jew; here God stricken dead professed disciples who did their works to be seen of men. He has infinite patience with ignorance and prejudice, but not with deliberate hypocrisy and false pretence."

In comparing this incident with Peter's epistles we note that he speaks of putting away all hypocrisies (1 Peter 2 : 1), and exhorts the younger to be subject to the elder. (1 Peter 5 : 5.) He appears as the same rebuker of sin, and prophet. He speaks of judgment beginning at the house of God (1 Peter 4 : 17); of those "having a heart exercised unto covetousness; children of cursing; forsaking the right way, they went astray, having followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved the hire of wrongdoing," (2 Peter 2 : 14, 15.)

12. As the account of the Pentecostal outpouring of the Spirit and that of the first open opposition to the church are followed by brief descriptions of its peaceful progress (2 : 43-47; 4 : 31-35.), so here are added similar statements of the prosperity that followed the signal judgments upon Ananias and Sapphira. The results of the divine discipline of the church: The Spirit manifests his power through the apostles in **signs and wonders** (2 : 22); meeting undisturbed in **Solomon's porch** (3 : 11); believers more distinct (ver. 13); and large numbers added to the Lord (ver. 14). **Wrought—were wrought** from time to time. **They were all with one accord** from day to day. Hackett, Alford, and some others refer this to the apostles, while Meyer, Alexander, Lange (Lechler), and others refer it to the congregation of believers. On the one hand, "apostles" is the subject of the preceding sentence, and would naturally appear to be the grammatical antecedent; but, on the other hand, the expression seems to partake of a loose, popular form with "they all," contrasted with "the rest" (ver. 13), the people outside of the company of believers. An intermediate view may be suggested which really combines the two: *They*—the apostles—and those with them—that is, the company of believers *were frequently all with one accord* (see on 1 : 13) *in Solomon's porch*, which was sufficiently large to accommodate them in their more public religious services. That they were thus permitted to hold meetings undisturbed shows how great was the effect of the signal judgment of God and the miracles that followed.

13. **Of the rest**—those outside of the apostles and their company; "the people" who were still unbelievers. **Durst no man (no one) join himself to them**—to the apostles and the believers with them, holding religious gatherings in Solomon's porch. The word rendered *join himself* is a strong word, meaning to enter into the closest

rest durst no man join himself to them; 14^o but the people magnified them. (And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.)

15 Inasmuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid *them* on beds and couches, *r* that at the least the shadow of Peter passing might overshadow some

° ch. 2 : 47; 4 : 21.

P Matt. 14 : 36; John 14 : 12.

relation as an associate, or a member of a company. (9 : 26; 10 : 28; 17 : 34.) Unbelievers were deterred from hypocritically joining themselves to the brotherhood and from mingling freely with them. The discipleship became more distinct, and they were left alone more than formerly in their religious assemblies. Alford's interpretation, that all believers and unbelievers were inspired with great awe by the apostles and dared not join them, but kept aloof from them, is far-fetched, and inconsistent with the social relations of the early church. (2 : 42-47; 4 : 32, 33.) "Such a view is inconsistent with the whole character of the life of the church, as it is described in *The Acts*." (LECHLER, in Lange.) **Magnified them**—regarded them with wonder and praised them.

14. And believers—*and those believing* from among the people—**were still more added to the Lord** (11 : 24), and hence added to the church. Hypocrites were repelled, unbelievers were kept in awe, and believers were attracted. Notice the different expressions: the three thousand were "added," "added to them," or to the church (2 : 41, 47), and here "added to the Lord," which they should be, if they united with the church. A church, according to the apostolic idea, consisted of a converted membership. **Multitudes**—indefinitely large numbers. Luke had spoken of the "three thousand" and the "five thousand" (2 : 41; 4 : 4), but the stream flows on so continuously and so freely that he ceases to number them. And these **both of men and women**. Doubtless at first the converts had been most largely from among the men, as has been the case at first in modern missions. But from the first, women had been among the discipleship (1 : 14), and doubtless were represented among the converts. Yet the mention of *women* here is significant. It would seem that the death of Sapphira was specially blessed in a great work among the women. They are also presented

as equal in privileges with the other sex (Gal. 3 : 28), a thing somewhat new both to Jew and Gentile.

15. Inasmuch that—*so that*; connected with the preceding verse. Many, especially the older expositors, make a parenthesis, some beginning with the middle of ver. 12, *And they were all with one accord*, etc., and ending with ver. 14; others include only ver. 14. The tendency among recent critics has been to assume no parenthesis at all. Indeed, there seems to be no necessity for one. For what more natural than that the great accession of converts should attract the people for the healing of various diseases. "The words, *so that along the streets they brought forth the sick*, etc., are very aptly connected with ver. 14; the two facts, that the people held the apostles in high estimation, and that the number of believers increased rapidly, explain why the sick were brought out into the streets. The words, indeed, connect themselves with ver. 14 far more neatly than with ver. 12. Are we to understand by *many signs and wonders wrought among the people*, merely the preceding events, the effect of which was *so that they brought forth*, etc.? To assume this would be to sacrifice the perspicuity of the narrative. For what else could these *many signs* have been but miracles of healing? Thus in the words *so that along*, etc., what had been only briefly indicated in ver. 12, recurs in another connection to be narrated more in detail. (Ver. 15 f.) Accordingly, I cannot bring myself to make ver. 14 a parenthesis." (WINER, *Grammar of N. T.*, Andover, 1869 p. 564.) **They brought forth**. The meaning is, that *the sick were brought forth* by any of the people, such as friends, those who had them in charge or were interested in them. **Streets**, or *broad ways*. See Luke 14 : 21, where the word is contrasted with *lanes*. **Beds**—according to the best Greek text, *little couches*—

16 of them. There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one.

The imprisonment, and miraculous deliverance of the apostles; their bold confession before the Sanhedrin, and release.

17 **THEN** the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is

q Mark 16 : 17, 18.

r ch. 4 : 1, 2, 6.

such as could be easily handled. **Couches**—a cheap light mattress, or camp-bed, capable of holding only one person, and used by the poorer people. Thus all classes, the rich and poor, were represented. **That at the least the shadow of Peter**, etc. This graphically describes the excitement, enthusiasm, and faith of the people bringing their sick. Whether they were healed is not stated; the probabilities are that they were. Not an instance is recorded in the New Testament where any one who came was not healed. Why should there be an exception here? The great crowd seeking the shadow of Peter showed great earnestness and childlike faith. (19 : 12; Mark 6 : 56.) A shadow might connect the recipient with the instrument of God's blessings, as well as a look (Num. 21 : 8), a fringe of a garment, (Matt. 9 : 20), a word (Matt. 8 : 10-13), or a touch.

16. There came also. In addition to all this which had occurred at Jerusalem, *there came the multitude out of, rather, of the cities round about Jerusalem.* The mass of the people of the surrounding country brought their sick. Many cities were within ten miles of Jerusalem, such as Bethany, Bethphage, Bethlehem, Emmaus, and Bethel. **Vexed.** The word thus translated is used in the New Testament only by Luke (here and in Luke 6 : 18), but often used by medical writers. **Unclean spirits**—called unclean because of their moral vileness. On demons and demoniacal possessions, see Author's *Notes on Matthew*. (4 : 24.) **Were healed every one**—a strong expression, meaning *all without exception* were healed.

17-42. THE IMPRISONMENT AND MIRACULOUS ESCAPE OF THE APOSTLES; THEIR BOLD CONFESSION AND RELEASE. Probably about A. D. 33.

17. Here arises the second attempt at persecution, the first being that recorded in 4 : 1-22. **Then**—not the

adverb of time, but the conjunction *and* or *but*, denoting that this hostile movement was the result of the great influence of the apostles and the prosperity of the church. **The high priest.** (See on 4 : 6.) Thought by some to be Caiaphas, but probably Annas, who acted as high priest in the former movement, probably several months before. (4 : 6.) By what follows, it is most natural to infer that Annas was a Sadducee. Some have supposed that Caiaphas was a Pharisee, which is certainly possible, as only the high priest is mentioned here. **Rose up**—proceeded to employ active measures. **All they that were with him**—in sympathy and opinion; namely, the Sadducees, as explained in the next clause. **Sect**—from the Greek word comes the English term *heresy*. It here means *the party*, the same as the Pharisees are spoken of in 15 : 5 ; 26 : 5. Christians are so named (24 : 5, 14 ; 28 : 22), with a suggestion of reproach. See Gal. 5 : 20 ; 1 Cor. 11 : 19, where the word means *parties* or *factions* and 2 Peter 2 : 1, where it is used of *heresy*, or perhaps rather *factions*, holding heretical views. The Pharisees and Sadducees were not two sects, in the modern sense of the word, independent of each other like two denominations, but two religious parties in the Jewish community, or body politic, holding distinct and opposing views. (See on 4 : 1.) They denied the existence of angels and spirits, as well as the resurrection of the body. (23 : 8 ; Luke 20 : 27.) Hence their opposition and **indignation** at the apostles and their preaching. According to Josephus, they denied the immortality of the soul and future retribution; and maintained man's freedom in opposition to the doctrine of divine predestination. (*Antiq.* 18 : 1, 4 ; *Jew. War.* 2 : 8, 14.) The *indignation* here spoken of, seems from the original word as used here and in 13 : 45 to be a malignant jealousy, resulting in

the sect of the ^aSadducees, and were 18 filled with indignation, and laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in 19 the common prison. But ^uthe angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said,

20 Go, stand and speak in the temple to the 21 people ^xall the words of this life. And when they heard *that*, they entered into the temple early in the morning, and taught.

But the high priest came, and they that

^a ch. 23 : 8. ^t ch. 4 : 3; Luke 21 : 12. ^u ch. 12 : 7-11; 16 : 26; Ps. 2 : 4; 34 : 7; Prov. 21 : 30. ^x ch. 11 : 14; John 6 : 68; 17 : 3; 1 John 5 : 11, 12.

indignation. The Sadducees saw in the preaching of Christ's resurrection a refutation of their system, and were jealously indignant at seeing the thousands following the preaching of Jesus. There was an outburst of party feeling.

18. Laid their hands—*laid hands*, seized, arrested, the apostles through the temple police or officers. Mark the progress in persecution; previously they had seized only Peter and John (4 : 3); now all the apostles. **Put them into the common prison**—rather *the public prison*, or *ward*, where they were kept for security, until the morning when the Sanhedrin would convene for the trial. It seems to have been some prison or guard-house outside of the temple. (Ver. 21.)

19. The angel—not *the* angel of the Lord, used in the Old Testament of the Son of God, but *an angel*. "It is a thing to be remarked, how often the angels were employed in the New Dispensation. They were sent generally for one or other of these two purposes: either to announce something which the hearer would not credit if spoken merely of a human being, or to do some act which was beyond the power of God's human servants to do. Examples of the former are the messages to Zachariah, Mary, and Joseph. (Matt. 1 : 13, 19; Luke 1 : 11, 26.); also to Paul before the shipwreck. (27 : 23.) Examples of the latter are the rolling away the stone at the resurrection, the deliverance of Peter, and the case before us." (Matt. 28 : 2; Acts 12 : 7.) (REV. T. A. T. HANNA, *Kings and Apostles*.) This miraculous interposition would encourage the apostles, and tend to make their persecutors hesitate. It is not unlikely that it helped Gamaliel to decide as to his lenient course. (Ver. 34-39.) **By night**—probably toward the morning hour. (Ver. 20.) **Opened the prison doors**—brought out the apos-

tes and shut the doors (ver. 23) either so quietly that the keepers did not hear nor see them, or else their senses were restrained by divine power.

20. Go, stand and speak—proceed on your way to the temple, and having taken your stand there, proclaim the gospel to the people. Preaching is the work of men, not of angels. **All the words of this life**—which they preached and was becoming known by their preaching—the spiritual, the eternal life which Christ brought to light through the gospel. (2 Tim. 1 : 10.) See "the word of this salvation" (12 : 26), and "the words of eternal life." (John 6 : 68.) They were to preach in the same place, to the same people, and the same truths, not withholding anything concerning Jesus and the resurrection. (4 : 2, 33.)

21. When they heard, etc.—*hearing it they went*. They needed but to hear to obey implicitly, going into the temple eagerly and punctually, **early in the morning**, at daybreak or early dawn, for such is the meaning of the word in Greek. **Into the temple**—the sacred enclosure, doubtless in Solomon's porch, where they had been accustomed to teach. (Ver. 12.) The people in the East are accustomed to rise early and begin their work, giving up midday as far as possible to rest. Dr. Hackett, *Illustrations of Scripture*, p. 129, says: "Men and women may be seen going forth to their labor in the fields, or starting on journeys, at the earliest break of day . . . Being anxious at Jerusalem to attend the services of a Jewish synagogue, I was summoned to rise for that purpose before it was light. In one instance I went thither at an early hour as we should call it, but found myself too late; the service was ended, the people gone, and the synagogue closed for the day."

were with him, and called the council together, and all the senate of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have
 22 them brought. But when the officers came, and found them not in the prison,
 23 they returned, and told, saying, The prison truly found we shut with all safety, and the keepers standing without before the doors: but when we had opened, we

24 found no man within. Now when the high priest and the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these things, they doubted of them whereunto
 25 this would grow. Then came one and told them, saying, Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and teaching the people.

26 Then went the captain with the officers,

3 ch. 4 : 1; Luke 22 : 4. 2 Matt. 2 : 4.

The high priest . . . and they . . . with him. (See on ver. 17-)

The high priest *came, being present*, on hand, at the temple, probably in that portion where the Sanhedrin held their meetings. He and those with him *called the council*, the Sanhedrin. This was the highest court of the Jews. (See on 4 : 5.) The more important cases were brought before this council. They could pronounce the penalty of death, but it was not valid unless confirmed by the Roman governor or procurator. The Jews trace its origin to Num. 11 : 16. **All the senate, or eldership.** The word in the original occurs only here in the New Testament. The Septuagint version uses it for *elders* of the whole people, or of any particular place. In the Apocrypha (1 Macc. 12 : 6) and Josephus it is used of the Sanhedrin. Some think that the elders of the nation are here meant, who were called in to give their advice. But the larger number regard it as rather emphasizing a full meeting of the Sanhedrin: *and indeed all the senate, or Sanhedrin*, that is, *all the eldership* connected with that body. The word translated **prison** is not the one used in ver. 18, but the one in ver. 23 and 16 : 26—a *place of bondage*, a jail.

22. The officers, or servants of the Sanhedrin. Found them not. (See 12 : 19-) "The Lord's messenger (angel) was earlier at work than the officers of either Annas or Herod." (REV. T. A. T. HANNA.) **Prison** (the same word used in ver. 19, but different from those used in ver 18 and 21)—a place of custody, where prisoners were kept and guarded.

23. Shut with all safety—closed and securely fastened. **Keepers standing without before, or at**, according to the best manuscripts. The

guard were *standing at the doors*, totally unconscious of what had occurred during the night. **When we had opened.** The keys were not in the hands of the keepers, but of the chief priests. It would seem that the apostles were the only prisoners, as *no one* was found within.

24. High priest—not in the original. Some manuscripts have *the priest*, by way of pre-eminence the high priest. But the oldest manuscripts and versions omit it, as does also the Revised Version. Alford and Meyer would retain it, on the ground that the great variety of readings, intended as corrections, indicate that it was originally present. **The captain of the temple.** (See on 4 : 1.) **Chief priests.** (See on 4 : 23.) **They doubted of them,** etc. *They were at a loss, or perplexed concerning them*, the apostles, *what this would become*, what would occur next, unless somehow prevented; and what would be the influence and the result of this.

25. While the Sanhedrin were in this perplexity there **came one**, who announces the surprising fact, that the apostles were teaching publicly in the temple. Notice how implicitly they obey the command of the angel, *Go, stand and speak.* (Ver. 20.)

26. Then, in consequence of this announcement, **the captain** of the temple (4 : 1) and **the officers** (ver. 22) went and brought them **without violence**, showing that the apostles offered no resistance. **For they feared the people**—indicating the influence and progress of the gospel among the common people. (See 4 : 21.) Some would put this in parenthesis, and translate what follows, *that they might not be stoned*; any violence done to the apostles might result in stoning. Others, according to many of the best

and brought them without violence: ^afor they feared the people, lest they should
27 have been stoned. And when they had brought them, ^bthey set them before the council: and the high priest asked them, 28 saying, ^cDid not we straitly command

you that ye should not teach in this name? And, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, ^dand intend to bring this man's ^eblood upon us.

29 Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, ^fWe ought to obey God

^a Matt. 21 : 26. ^b Mark 15 : 9. ^c ch. 4 : 18.
23 : 35; 27 : 25.

^d ch. 2 : 23, 36; 4 : 10, 11; 7 : 52. ^e Matt.
^f ch. 4 : 19, 20.

manuscripts, make no parentheses and omit *that*, and render, *lest they should be stoned*. So the Revised Version. "The stoning, so often mentioned in the New Testament, is not mere pelting, as an act of popular violence, but an ancient theocratical expression of abhorrence for some act of blasphemy or treason to Jehovah. This form of capital punishment, for such it was, had been preferred to others in the law, because it made the death of the offender, not the act of a hated executioner, but that of all the people who were present, and especially of those who had acted as informers and witnesses. From this arose the peculiar Jewish custom of taking up stones to stone one, as a sort of testimony against him. (John 8 : 5; 10 : 31-33; 11 : 8.) . . . Such was the popular regard for the apostles, that the men sent to arrest them were afraid, not merely of bodily injury, but of being denounced, and disowned by the people, as untrue to the theocracy and law of Moses." (DR. J. A. ALEXANDER.)

27. They set them before the council. The only time when all the apostles were on trial together. In connection with ver. 40, there was a fulfillment of Christ's words in Mark 13 : 9. The high priest as president of the Sanhedrin and the theocratic head of the nation **asked them**, expostulating with them.

28. Did we not straitly, etc. *Not* is omitted according to the highest critical authorities, which reject the interrogative form and read, *We strictly commanded you not to teach, etc.* **In, or upon, this name**, the ground of their preaching, but the name Jesus the high priest refrains to mention, either from hatred or from a secret consciousness of guilt. This prohibition shows what a power the name of Jesus was having upon the people. **Behold** introduces the surprising fact that

these preachers had filled Jerusalem with their **doctrine**, rather *teaching*. A testimony to their faithfulness as preachers. **To bring this man's blood upon us**—to fix upon us the crime of putting to death an innocent person. (2 : 23; 3 : 14; 4 : 10.) They had said, "His blood be upon us and upon our children." (Matt 27 : 25.) Now they began to feel it was coming. Here we see the principal cause and animus of their hostility. "*This man* is not itself contemptuous, (see Luke 23 : 47; John 7 : 46), but could have that turn given to it by the voice, and was so uttered probably at this time." (HACKETT.)

29. In their answer the apostles declare that their paramount allegiance was to God wherever there was a conflict between human and divine law; they do not relieve the Jewish rulers of the crime of shedding innocent blood, but so far from designing to bring punishment upon them, they proclaim Jesus as a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel, of which these very rulers formed a part. **Peter** acts as spokesman, the other apostles assenting and speaking through him. **We ought to, or must, obey God rather than men.** A principle that commends itself to every man's conscience. See examples in notes on 4 : 19, 20, where the same principle is presented more pointedly. Notice that the apostles claimed the right to judge for themselves what was right or wrong regarding religious and civil duties; and to disobey a human law which opposed obedience to a divine requirement. In practice they cheerfully submitted to the penalties enforced against them (ver. 41), fled persecution (2 Cor. 11 : 32, 33) and never forcibly resisted the public authorities. In their teaching they enforced the general principles of obedience to human law as a duty to the Divine Originator of all law (Rom.

30 rather than men. ^gThe God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and
 31 ^hhanged on a tree. ⁱHim hath God exalted with his right hand *to be* ^ka Prince and ^la Saviour, ^mfor to give repentance

32 to Israel, and ⁿforgiveness of sins. And ^owe are his witnesses of these things; and *so is* also the Holy Spirit, ^pwhom God hath given to them that obey him.

^g ch. 3 : 13, 15. ^h ch. 10 : 39; Deut. 21 : 23; 1 Peter 2 : 24. ⁱ Ps. 110 : 1, 2; Phil. 2 : 9; Heb. 12 : 2. ^k Ps. 2 : 6-12; Dan. 9 : 25, 26. ^l Matt. 1 : 21; Luke 2 : 11. ^m ch. 3 : 26; Ezek. 36 : 25-27; Zech. 12 : 10. ⁿ ch. 13 : 38; Mark. 2 : 7, 10; Eph. 1 : 7. ^o ch. 1 : 8; John 15 : 26, 27; Heb. 2 : 4. ^p ch. 2 : 4, 38, 39; John 7 : 39.

13:1, 2), to whom they should commit themselves when wrongfully treated by legal tribunals. (1 Peter 2 : 22, 23.)

30. The God of our fathers—a covenant-keeping God, who had watched over their nation, giving them a godly ancestry, prophets, and promises. (3:24, 25.) They speak as Jews and as worshiping the same God with their rulers. **Raised up Jesus**, in whom God's covenants and promises are fulfilled. (3:26.) This means raised, either from the dead, or as one sent of God into the world. The latter suits the connection best. See 13 : 22, where the word has a similar use. "Meyer, who adopts the view of Erasmus and others, supposes that the phrase: *God raised up Jesus* refers to the resurrection of Jesus from the dead; but when *raised up* has this sense in the Acts it is always connected with *from the dead* (3:15; 4:10; 13:30) or the context indicates the sense. (10:40; 13:37.) Besides, the sequence of the clauses beginning with *raised up*—*ye slew*—*exalted*, indicates that the succession of events, in the order in which they really occurred, was intended to be set forth. Hence *raised up* cannot refer to any other event than the public appearance of Jesus as the messenger of God. In accordance with this interpretation 'exalted' in ver. 31 includes both the resurrection and ascension." (LECHLER, *Lange Com.*) With this treatment of God toward Jesus their treatment of him is contrasted: **Whom ye slew**, etc. Observe a similar contrast in 2 : 23, 24; 3 : 13, 15; 4 : 10. **Slew**—the word thus translated occurs in the New Testament only here and in 26 : 21, and means to *lay hands upon*, despatch, *slay* by laying hands upon. **Hanged on a tree**—rather, *hanging him on the tree, or the wood*, a Hebraistic and softened way of referring to the cross. (13:29.) For the origin of the

expression, see Deut. 21 : 22. The idea here is, *slew by hanging on the tree*, by crucifixion. (See Peter's use of the word *tree* in 10 : 39; 1 Peter 1 : 24.)

31. Him hath God exalted, etc. Rather, *Him a Prince*, who is *a Prince and Saviour*, *hath God exalted*. The two functions of the Messiah are here brought to view, the princely or kingly and the redemptive, indicating his authority and his saving power. (Isa. 9 : 6; 19 : 20; Dan. 8 : 25; 9 : 25; Heb. 2 : 10; 5 : 9.) The word prince is the same as in 3 : 15, and here means chief leader, captain, *prince*. **With, rather to, his right hand**—to share in the honor and power of that position. (2 : 23. See on 2 : 33.) **To give repentance**. Jesus not merely gives a time or place or opportunity, but also the disposition of repentance itself. A soul dead in trespasses and sins can no more quicken itself to repentance than it can give to itself spiritual life. (See 11 : 18; Rom. 2 : 4; 2 Cor. 2 : 25; John 16 : 7, 8.) **Excuses of un-renewed persons**, such as they cannot repent, and they have no proper sense of sin, are vain, for Christ is exalted for the very purpose of giving to sinners such penitent feelings as they need. On *repentance*, see note on 2 : 38. **Forgiveness of sins**. The same as rendered *remission of sins* in 2 : 38, on which see note. Forgiveness is *pardon* to let sins go as if never committed, and to remit the penalty. In repentance and forgiveness of sins a change of heart, life, and purpose is implied. (3 : 19; 26 : 20; Matt. 3 : 8.) **To Israel**. This does not restrict it to them, but this was all the apostles needed then to preach. (3 : 26.) The time for offering the gospel to the Gentiles had not yet come.

32. We are his witnesses—as foretold in 1 : 8; and as appointed by Christ himself. (Luke 24 : 47-49.) Compare the latter passage with this, and

33 ^a When they heard *that*, they were cut *to the heart*, and took counsel to slay 34 them. Then stood there up one in the

council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to

a ch. 2 : 37 ; 7 : 54.

notice their similarity, an incidental evidence of the truthfulness of the two accounts. **Of these things**, or *sayings*, which are the subject-matter of this discourse. The word translated *things* means literally *words, sayings*, and hence is sometimes used for the subject-matter of a narration or discourse. (See 10 : 37 ; Luke 1 : 65 : 2 : 15, 19.) **And so is also the Holy Spirit**—by his special gifts conferred upon them on the day of Pentecost (2 : 4 ; 10 : 44-46 ; 19 : 6 ; Mark 16 : 20), such as speaking with tongues and working miracles ; also by the inward witness afforded believers. (Rom. 8 : 16 ; Gal. 4 : 6 ; 1 John 3 : 24.) “Since the Holy Spirit testified to the gospel in both ways, and since the remark here is unqualified, we have no reason to consider the expression less extensive than the facts in the case.” (HACKETT.) **Whom God hath given to them that obey him**—hence, those who believe on Jesus and follow him. The Spirit had been promised them (1 : 5) that they might testify as Christ’s witnesses. (John 15 : 26, 27.) They were obeying God (ver. 29) in testifying concerning Jesus, and the Spirit through them and with them corroborated their testimony.

33. The effect of this address. **They were cut to the heart**—literally, *They were sawn asunder*, that is, mentally. They were greatly irritated, exasperated, convulsed with rage. The truth pierces the heart with what different effects. On the day of Pentecost it produced sorrow for sin (2 : 37) ; here it awakened revengeful wrath, mingled perhaps with conscious guilt. **Took counsel**—were taking counsel how they could **slay them**. However much they might purpose to slay, to do it needed deliberation ; for what charge could they bring against them ? Not blasphemy, for the apostles had spoken reverently. Besides, the Roman governor alone could inflict capital punishment, and neither treason nor insurrection could be charged against any of the disciples. The Jewish rulers would also dread to run counter to public

opinion, which was strongly in favor of the apostles (ver. 13, 26), even though their rage might prompt them to slay without law.

34. While these things were going on, **Gamaliel** interposed conciliatory words. He was a **Pharisee**, and in sympathy with the doctrine of the resurrection preached by the apostles, and in a measure not in sympathy with the Sadducees, the leaders of this persecution. (See note on 4 : 1.) The Pharisees originated about one hundred and fifty years before Christ, and were noted for their rigid observance of the letter of the law and their traditions. Gamaliel was also a **doctor**—*teacher and interpreter*—of the law of Moses, and of the traditions or oral law. The same word is found in Luke 5 : 17 ; 1 Tim. 1 : 7. **Had in reputation**—*honored*—by all the people for his learning and influence. He may be regarded as the people’s leader and representative in the Sanhedrin, in opposition to the persecuting party. Thus God had the man to help the apostles at the right time and place, for they were yet to be witnesses in Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. (1 : 8.) *Gamaliel* is said to have been of the royal line of David and grandson of the eminent Hillel, of whose school he was the most distinguished exponent. “From the fragments which have his name attached to them, we see that Gamaliel was endowed with great intellectual powers, a fondness for study and for definitely settling every point of difficulty, refined taste, and good judgment ; that he was humane, anxious to ameliorate the condition of the helpless, a strict Pharisee, yet liberal minded, and averse to persecute those who differed from him. . . . His mental powers, tastes, and liberal-mindedness may be seen from the fact that he extended his studies to Greek literature, and infused into the minds of his disciples a taste for the Greek poets. (17 : 28 ; 1 Cor. 15 : 33 ; Titus 1 : 12.)” (*Alexander’s Kitto’s Cyclopædia*.) He was the teacher of Paul

35 put the apostles forth a little space; and said unto them, Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what ye intend to do
36 as touching these men. For before these

days rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain; and all, as many

(21:3), and was the first one to whom the title "Rabban," "our Master," was given. Tradition makes him a secret disciple of Jesus, and afterward openly baptized by Peter and Paul; but of this there is no evidence, and it appears improbable. He lived about eighteen years after this, and died A. D. 52. He is to be distinguished from his grandson of the same name. **Commanded**—an authoritative exhortation. The word thus translated here and in 4:15 usually designates verbal orders, commonly from a superior. The time and manner of giving it and the way it was obeyed show the influence of Gamaliel with the Sanhedrin. Peter and John had had the same experience before. (1:15.) **A little space**—rather, *a little while*.

35. **And said unto them.** Here follows the outline of his speech. After a note of warning of possible error and danger to themselves, addressed to their fears, he cites two historical examples (ver. 36, 37), and then states and applies the principle of action to the case before them. The speech illustrates the prudence and shrewdness of Gamaliel, and is in this respect worthy of his reputation. He begins by ranking the apostles with certain impostors, but ends by suggesting that their work may be of God. **What ye intend**—*what ye are about to do*.

36. **For before these days** introduces a reason for the warning. It was not a new thing for impostors, fanatics, and seditionists to appear. For there **rose up Theudas**. This is not the one mentioned by Josephus (*Antiq.*, 20:5, 1), and beheaded A. D. 45, eleven or twelve years after this; for the Theudas of Gamaliel had comparatively few adherents, while the one mentioned by Josephus had a great "company of people." "Since Luke represents Theudas as having preceded Judas the Galilean, it is certain that he could not have appeared later, at all events, than in the later years of Herod the Great. The very year of that monarch's death was remarkably turbulent; the land was overrun with bellig-

erent parties, under the direction of insurrectionary chiefs or fanatics. Josephus mentions but three of these disturbers by name; he passes over the others with a general allusion." (Dr. HACKETT, *Smith's Dictionary*.) Theudas may have been among these. A person of little note and small following might well be passed over at such times. The name Theudas was not an uncommon one, and it is not strange if two insurgents of that name appeared within a space of fifty years. Josephus mentions four named Simon within forty years, and three named Judas within ten years, who were all leaders of rebellion. (See *Smith's Dictionary* for this and other ways of harmonizing Luke and Josephus.) **Boasting**—*proclaiming himself to be somebody*, some important one. (See the fuller expression in 8:9.) But in opposition to this, he was **slain**, his followers were **scattered** and *came to nothing*.

37. **After Theudas, Judas of Galilee appeared.** Josephus calls him the Gaulonite, a native of the town of Gamala, and also styles him a Galilean, his education or his usual residence being in Galilee. At the time of the **taxing**, or, rather, *the registering*, undertaken by Cyrenius (the Greek form of Quirinus), Judas headed an insurrection against the Roman supremacy, calling upon his countrymen not to submit to human despotism, and claiming that God was their only ruler and Lord. Large numbers flocked to his standard. The rebellion was suppressed, many captured and crucified by the Romans. The spirit of Judas, however, continued to manifest itself in the Zealots and Sicarii, from his time down to the destruction of Jerusalem and the scattering of the Jewish race. (See on 1:13.) Luke tells us that Judas **perished**; and that while the attempt of Theudas came to nothing, the followers of Judas were only *dispersed*, an incidental evidence of the accuracy of Luke's record. According to Josephus, after the banishment of Archelaus, A. D. 6, Cyrenius became governor of Syria,

as obeyed him, were scattered, and
 37 brought to nought. After this man rose
 up Judas of Galilee in the days of the
 taxing, and drew away much people after
 him: he also perished; and all, *even* as
 many as obeyed him, were dispersed.
 38 And now I say unto you, Refrain from
 these men, and let them alone: ^rfor if

this counsel or this work be of men it
 39 will come to nought: ^sbut if it be of God,
 ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be
 found even ^tto fight against God.

40 And to him they agreed: and when
 they had called the apostles, ^uand beaten
 them, they commanded that they should
 not speak in the name of Jesus, and let

^r Prov. 21 : 30; Isa. 7 : 5-7; 8 : 9, 10; Lam. 3 : 37.

^s Job 34 : 29; Isa. 43 : 13; Luke 21 : 15.

^t ch. 23 : 9; Isa. 45 : 9.

^u Matt. 23 : 34; Mark 13 : 9.

Judea was converted into a Roman province with a view of taxation, and the enrollment which excited the opposition here related was undertaken or completed. (Josephus' *Ant.*, 18 : 1, 6; 20 : 5, 2; *Jewish War*, 2 : 8, 1.) This enrollment is to be distinguished from that mentioned in Luke 2 : 2, on which see Author's note.

38. And now—as respects the case in hand. Gamaliel proceeds to apply the principle deduced from the two examples given. **Refrain from these men**—attempt not to slay them, as you propose. **For** introduces the reason for such advice. **If this counsel**, or *purpose*, and the execution of it, should be of men, without regard to God and in defiance of him, **it will come to nought**—literally, it will *dissolve*, like many fanatical movements in the past, without any interference on your part. "The expression is peculiarly appropriate to that internal dissolution which, even in the absence of all outward force, awaits every system of religious faith which has a merely human origin." (DR. J. A. ALEXANDER.) Gamaliel is not speaking of all enterprises in general, many of which should be stopped by law; but of religious movements, and this in particular, which was either of men or of God, which must eventually either stand or fall.

39. But if it be, etc.—*but if it is of God*, a case which I assume, **ye cannot**, rather, according to the most approved text, *ye will not be able*, by anything that ye may do to these men or to their followers, **to overthrow it**, and indeed ye ought not to attempt it, **lest haply ye be found even to be fighting against God**, and thus guilty of rebellion against him. Neander remarks that Gamaliel "on the one hand had a clear conception of

the fact that fanatical movements are generally rendered more violent by opposition, and that what is insignificant is often raised into importance by forcible attempts to suppress it. On the other hand, the manner in which the apostles spoke and acted must have made some impression on a man not wholly prejudiced; while their exact observance of the law, and their hostile attitude toward Sadduceeism, must have disposed him more strongly in their favor, and hence the thought might have arisen in his mind that, after all, there was something divine in the cause they advocated." (*Planting and Training*, p. 46.) It has been said that the reasoning of Gamaliel was fallacious and temporizing. But it fitted his audience and the occasion and accomplished the end he had in view. And it is true that ultimately God's cause shall prevail over all opposition, and that every false system of religious belief will come to nought. Mohammedanism may thrive, and religious errors may flourish, but their end draweth nigh. (2 Peter 2 : 1-3.) They will be overcome, not by physical force, or the power of civil laws, but by the power of truth, and the glory of Christ.

40. To him they agreed—rather, *they were persuaded by him*. They yielded so far as not to kill the apostles. The great power of Gamaliel's influence and persuasiveness is seen in the fact that Sadducean leadership and murderous rage should yield to a Pharisee counselling forbearance. Notwithstanding, the rulers determined to punish, in some way, the disobedience of the apostles (ver. 28), and thus carry out their previous threats. (4 : 17, 21.) **Beaten them**. The Greek verb originally meant *to flay*, in which sense it is never used in the New Testament, where it means to *beat*, *smite*, *scourge*.

41 them go. And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame

42 for his name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.

* ch. 16 : 23-25; Matt. 5 : 10-12; 2 Cor. 12 : 10; Heb. 10 : 34; 1 Peter 4 : 13-16. † ch. 9 : 20; 29; 17 : 3.

Its use may be seen in the following passages: (16 : 37; 22 : 19, Luke 12 : 47; 20 : 10; 22 : 63; John 18 : 23; 2 Cor. 11 : 20; Mark 13 : 9.) The apostles probably received the Jewish scourge, and not the more cruel Roman scourge which was inflicted on Jesus. See Matt. 27 : 26; Mark 15 : 15, where a different word is used, and Luke 18 : 33 where still an other word is employed, found also in Acts 22 : 25. Beating was a common punishment among the Jews. It was very likely borrowed from the Egyptians, who used the bastinado either on the feet or back. The Jewish scourging consisted of blows upon the back with a rod or whip. "It was limited to forty stripes—a number which the Jews in later times were so careful not to exceed, that they inflicted only thirty-nine. (2 Cor. 11 : 24.) It was to be inflicted on the offender lying on the ground, in the presence of a judge. (Deut. 22 : 18; 25 : 2, 3.) We have abundant evidence that it was an ancient Egyptian punishment." (Alexander's *Kitto's Cyclopaedia*.) **Commanded them not**, etc. (See on 4 : 17, 18.) This second command was to prove as vain as the first, and the Sanhedrin was placed in an unenviable light.

41. Rejoicing. Remembering the teaching of their Lord: "Happy are ye, when they shall revile and persecute you." (Matt. 5 : 10-12.) Joy was a prominent characteristic of the early disciples. (2 : 46; 4 : 24, 31.) **Counted worthy to suffer shame.** A choice union of words of opposite meaning, a wonderful paradox—the honor of being dishonored! We catch here the first view of the martyr spirit in the early church, esteeming it a privilege to suffer for Christ. (Phil. 1 : 29.) No one can attentively read the first epistle of Peter and compare it with this passage without recognizing the subdued yet hopeful and rejoicing spirit of one who had experienced the sorrows and joys of the fiery trials through which he had passed. (See 1 Peter 3 : 13-18; 4 : 1, 2,

12-19.) **For his name**—rather, *for the name*, which they had been forbidden to teach, which to them was more than all other names, the name by which they wrought miracles and by which alone men could be saved, the name above every name that is named. (1 Tim. 2 : 9, 10; Eph. 1 : 21; Heb. 1 : 4.) See 1 Peter 4 : 16, where the apostle speaks about suffering as a Christian.

42. They do that which they were commanded not to do. (V. R. 41; 4 : 18.) **Daily in the temple and in every house**—from house to house, or at home. (See note on these words in 2 : 46.) They labored publicly, privately, personally, and perseveringly. What they did: *teaching and preaching*. The two methods are here distinguished. By the one they addressed the understanding, expounding and instructing concerning the great truths of Jesus as the Messiah. (18 : 11; 28 : 31; 15 : 35.) By the other, events, facts, and truths are *proclaimed as good news* and of public importance. They preached **Jesus Christ**, the good news of *Jesus the Christ*. Preaching here in the original is a joyous word, and a favorite one with Luke and Paul, being used only six times by the other writers of the New Testament. (Matt. 11 : 5; 1 Peter 1 : 12, 25; 4 : 6; Rev. 10 : 7; 14 : 6.) From it are derived our words *evangelize*, *evangelists*. (See Luke 2 : 10; 4 : 18; 9 : 6; Rom. 10 : 15.) Another word translated *preach* or *herald*, is used in 8 : 5, and frequently throughout the New Testament. It is used in the last commission (Mark 16 : 16; with *gospel*, or the *good news*, being the noun of the verb above, while in the commission in Matt. 28 : 20 *teaching* is found. The latter being used especially of the instruction of believers.

YOUNG MEN AND THE CHURCH. Young people want work, and pastors and churches should give them something to do. Otherwise they will throw their energies into other enterprises and outside channels. The apostles and the church at Jerusalem had their

young men ready for service. (5:6, 10.) Paul sought out Timothy at Lystra, and selected him as an attendant, (16:1-3.) Jesus too chose the twelve from young men. And the beloved disciple, near the close of his life, said, "I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong." (1 John 2:14.) Christianity is hopeful and cheerful and is thus especially adapted to youth. It gives opportunity, and the young can find no where else work so noble and so glorious in results. There should be a mutual co-operation and helpfulness between the older and younger members of our churches.

PRACTICAL REMARKS.

1. What a contrast was Ananias to Barnabas! "Where there is light there will also be a shadow. Where God builds a church the devil builds a chapel by its side." (LECHLER.) (Ver. 1; John 6:70; Matt. 13:24-30.)

2. There are those who still "keep back part of the price." They profess to give up all to Christ, yet live unmindful of their vows. (Ver. 2; Mal. 3:8-10.)

3. Lying and hypocrisy will sooner or later be detected. (Ver. 3; Jer. 17:10; 1 Chron. 28:9; Rev. 2:23; 21:8.)

4. Satan may tempt men to sin, yet the sin is their own. He cannot enter and take possession of their hearts without their permission. (Ver. 3, 4; John 8:44; 13:27; James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:9.)

5. Beneficence should be exercised voluntarily and cheerfully, as unto God. (Ver. 4; Ps. 50:10-14; 2 Cor. 9:7.)

6. Sinners may well tremble before God, in whose hands are their lives and breaths. (Ver. 5, 10; Deut. 4:24; Gal. 6:7; 2 Peter 2:3.)

7. It is not upon the dead body, but upon the living soul that punishment is to be executed. (Ver. 6, 7; Ezek. 18:4, 18.)

8. A sin under the excitement of the moment is bad enough; but deliberately planned transgression is greatly more aggravated. (Ver. 8, 9; Micah 2:1.)

9. Marriage is perverted when it contributes to partnership in sin. (Ver. 9; Deut. 7:3, 4; Heb. 13:4.)

10. "As Cain stands at the very threshold of human history, as a warning against un-

der-valuing man's life, so Ananias stands at the threshold of the Christian Church, as a warning against insincerity toward God, and undervaluing his holiness." (DR. SCHAFF.) (Ver. 10; Gen. 3:9-15.)

11. God's judgments should awaken a holy fear, and lead to watchfulness and searchings of heart. (Ver. 11; Heb. 12:25-29.)

12. Though God brings judgments upon the ungodly, he will not turn away from the cry of the needy. (Ver. 12; Ps. 72:12; Hab. 3:2.)

13. The judgments of God are used by the Spirit both for deterring hypocrites and multiplying true converts. Proper discipline tends to healthfulness and increase of the church. (Ver. 13, 14, ch. 13:12; Ps. 55:22, 23.)

14. Christianity has elevated woman to her proper place and sphere by the side of man. "The present childish seclusion of women, their complete separation from all public society in the East, is a fair representation of the existence which they led in all the Oriental kingdoms before the days of Christ." (DR. J. S. HOWSON.) (Ver. 14; 21:9; Phil. 4:3.)

15. God often accomplishes his work by the weakest means,—as by "the shadow of Peter." (Ver. 15; 1 Cor. 1:26-29; Matt. 9:21, 22.)

16. In Christ and his gospel there is a full supply for all who seek his saving power. (Ver. 16; John 6:37; James 5:14, 15.)

17. It is better for God's people that blessings and trials alternate. Thereby humility, faith, patience, and purity are the better developed. (Ver. 17, 18; Rom. 5:3-5; 2 Cor. 4:17; 1 Peter 4:12.)

18. When Christ wills, prison bolts are as nothing before him. (Ver. 18, 19; John 20:19; 26.)

19. A divine "but" often disconcerts the plans of men, and brings to nought the devices of Satan. (Ver. 19, 22, 34; Gen. 50:20.)

20. Duty performed in danger is better than safety with duty neglected. (Ver. 20, 21; John 3:2, 3.)

21. God sometimes delivers us from one danger, in order to prepare and strengthen us for another. (Ver. 19-26; 1 Kings 19:13-18.)

22. Wicked men dread the light of truth. The Jewish rulers do not ask the apostles

Appointment of Alms-Distributors; growing prosperity.

6 AND in those days, when the number

² ch. 9 : 29; 11 : 20.

how they escaped. They wish no more testimony of miraculous deliverances. (Ver. 22-24; John 3 : 19, 20.)

23. Sinners need not be in doubt or perplexed regarding the truth. Both external and internal evidence accompany "the words of this life." (Ver. 20-25; John 7 : 17; 14 : 11, 12.)

24. Christianity recognizes civil authority, and enjoins obedience to all just laws and respect for all in authority. (Ver. 26, 27; 25 : 11; Rom. 13 : 1-7.)

25. Godliness makes heroes; wickedness makes cowards. (Ver. 26; Prov. 28 : 1.)

26. The motives of good men are often misjudged. The apostles wished the salvation of the Jewish rulers, not their destruction. (Ver. 28, 31; 21 : 28.)

27. "Moral heroism reached its climax when Peter and his fellow apostles said : 'We ought to obey God rather than men.'" (DR. J. M. PENDLETON.) (Ver. 29; Matt. 10 : 28.)

28. Jesus is sent from God and should be welcomed to our hearts. (Ver. 30; John 3 : 2; Rev. 3 : 20.)

29. Jesus is Prince and Saviour. We should therefore honor and obey him. (Ver. 31; Rom. 6 : 16, 17; Heb. 9 : 9.)

30. Human and divine agency unite in the work of salvation. Repentance and faith are both gifts of God, yet human acts. (Ver. 31; Phil. 2 : 12, 13.)

31. The Holy Spirit bears witness to the hearts and consciences of men for Christ and his salvation. (Ver. 32; John 16 : 8-10; Rom. 8 : 16; Heb. 10 : 15, 16.)

32. Gospel preaching awakens repentance and leads to forgiveness, or awakens opposition, remorse, or anger, and leads to increased guilt. (Ver. 33; 2 Cor. 2 : 16.)

33. When God has a work to be done he has some one to do it. (Ver. 34; Judg. 2 : 16; 3 : 9, 15.)

34. Contrast the false prophet with the true. The one rises up of himself, the other is raised up of God (3 : 22); that one "boasts himself to be some one," this one ascribes the honor to the Lord (3 : 12-16); the former "draws much people" after himself, the latter leads men to God (ver. 31); these perish

of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the ²Greeians against the Hebrews because their widows were neglected ²in the daily ministrations.

² ch. 2 : 45; 4 : 35.

with their own delusions (Jude 13), those live to shine as the stars forever. (Ver. 36, 37; Dan 12 : 3.)

35. It is impossible to be neutral in Christ's cause. (Ver. 38-40; Matt. 12 : 30.)

36. If the opinion of Gamaliel is just, then surely Christianity is from God, for it has stood the test of eighteen centuries, living without arms or human power, overcoming external opposition and persecution, and internal treachery and secret foes, and increasing in spite of all the devices of Satan and wicked men. (Ver. 39.)

37. To fight against God is an act of supreme folly and wickedness. (Ver. 39; Neh. 1 : 3, 6.)

38. The wicked will oppose the gospel just so far as their selfish interests and circumstances will permit. (Ver. 40; Jer. 3 : 5.)

39. Faithfulness to Christ often requires 'resistance unto blood,' but its reward is the crown of life. (Ver. 41, 42; Rev. 2 : 9-11.)

40. It is an honor to be partners of Jesus whether in suffering or in glory. (Ver. 41; 1 Peter 4 : 14-16.)

41. The apostles are an example, who forgot themselves and their sufferings, and constantly preached Jesus, the Christ. (Ver. 42; 2 Cor. 4 : 5.)

Ch. 6 : During this period of prosperity a difference arises in the church, in consequence of which seven men are chosen to attend to the distribution of alms. Stephen, one of the seven, distinguishes himself in his work, and becomes involved in a controversy with certain foreign Jews, who bring him before the Sanhedrin with the charge of blasphemy. The time of these occurrences may be put down as near the end of A. D. 33 or early in A. D. 34.

1-7. THE APPOINTMENT OF ALMS DISTRIBUTORS IN THE CHURCH AT JERUSALEM. (See 1 Tim. 3 : 8-13; 4 : 14-16; 5 : 9, 10.)

1. In those days. *In these days* of faithful labor just recorded (5 : 42), *the disciples*—a favorite term in the Acts for those who confessed that Jesus

2 tion. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples *unto them*, and said, ^bIt is not reason that we should leave

the word of God and serve tables. 3 Wherefore, brethren, ^clook ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of

^b Neh. 6 : 3; 1 Tim. 4 : 14-16; 2 Tim. 2 : 4. ^c Deut. 1 : 13; 1 Tim. 3 : 7-10.

was the Christ (ver. 2, 7; 9:1),—having multiplied, numbered probably not less than ten thousand. (4:4; 5:11.) The events here recorded are closely connected with the history of Stephen, and must have covered a short period, of a few weeks or months, before his death. **There arose a murmuring**, implying that it was a new thing; a *muttering*, a suppressed dissatisfaction and discontent which were making themselves felt in words and acts. **Of the Grecians against the Hebrews.** The former were the converts from the foreign or Grecian Jews, called Hellenists, who spoke the Greek language and used the Septuagint, the Greek version of the Old Testament. They were also called the Dispersion. (John 7 : 35; James 1 : 1; 1 Peter 1 : 1.) The *Hebrews* were natives of Palestine and others who used the Hebrew Scriptures and spoke the Aramæan, the dialect of the Hebrew then current. This difference, not of race, but of language, appears to have given rise to jealousy and party spirit, though not thus early to a difference of faith and practice in the church. Some among the Hebrews became the Judaizers a few years later. (15:1.) From the fact that “Nicolas, a proselyte of Antioch,” was chosen as one of the seven (ver. 5), it may be inferred that some proselytes were popularly included among those here styled Grecian Jews. **Widows** under the Mosaic law were not provided for, but were dependent upon relatives, and especially upon the eldest son, yet they were special objects of compassion. (Exod. 22 : 22; Deut. 10 : 18; Isa. 1 : 17; Jer. 7 : 6; Zech. 7 : 10.) The early Christian Church made certain provision for widows, especially for those who had been faithful to one husband and had devoted their better days to family duties and good works, and had reached the age of sixty. (1 Tim. 5 : 3-5, 9, 10.) **Were neglected**—not intentionally, but probably from the fact that these women were less known and had no relatives to report their necessities. The language implies

that it was common. **In the daily ministration**—*in the distribution* of food, and perhaps sometimes of money, which was daily made from the common supply. (4:35.) The apostles had superintended this, and probably had called others to aid them as it might be necessary, and this also may in part account for the partial manner in which the work was done.

2. The twelve—the apostles, including Matthias, showing that the choice of the latter to the apostleship was valid. (See on 1 : 26.) **Called the multitude of the disciples**—the whole body of believers. All were invited, but it is not necessary to suppose that all came. Many would be kept at home, and many foreign Jews had left the city. It was a public meeting of the church, and all could come who desired. It would seem that the church did not regularly meet as a whole, but, being large, had several meeting-places at the same time. Yet when a matter was to be decided every one had a right to take part in the decision. The apostles prescribe the mode of action, as in the election of Matthias (1:15-26), and refer the matter to the body of believers for their determination. **It is not reason**, etc.—literally, *Forsaking the word of God to serve tables is not pleasing to us*. It was not pleasing to them, nor to God, that they should abandon the preaching of the gospel, in order to minister at tables, taking care of and distributing the things necessary to sustain life. (Luke 8 : 3; 16 : 34.) From the Greek verb *to serve*, our word *deacon* is derived. The apostles, here and in the next two verses, contrast the higher work of feeding and taking spiritual charge of souls with furnishing food for the body and supplying the physical wants of the poor.

3. Brethren, of the church, **look ye out from among you**. The choice was to be made by the members of the church, and from among themselves. **Seven men of honest report**—*seven approved men*, of attested character.

the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we
4 may appoint over this business. But we
4 will give ourselves continually to prayer,
and to the ministry of the word.

4 ch. 2 : 42; 1 Tim. 4 : 13; 2 Tim. 4 : 2.

5 And the saying pleased the whole
multitude: and they chose Stephen, a
man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit,
and Philip, and Prochorus, and Ni-

5 ch. 8 : 5-13, 26-40; 21 : 8.

Why *seven* were chosen is unknown. Different reasons have been assigned, such as that the church was divided into seven congregations, or that seven nations were represented in it. Probably it was because as many as seven were needed for the work; and seven, also, was a number having sacred associations. It is worthy of notice that the early churches, for two or three centuries, observed the number *seven* in the selection of deacons, thus following as their model the account here given. **Full of the Holy Spirit.** *Holy* is omitted by the highest critical authorities. Literally, *full of Spirit*, impregnated, as it were, with the Spirit. They were to be under the influence and enjoy the personal abiding of the Spirit of God, such as they needed for the discharge of the special duties of the office, perhaps also his extraordinary supernatural endowments. **Wisdom**—ability to act discreetly in all emergencies. They would need to be “wise as serpents.” **Whom we may appoint**—or, *set, over*; the apostles will confirm the choice of the church. **This business**—or, *this necessity* which had arisen in the church. A similar necessity was to continue in the Christian church, though under different circumstances, and hence what here seemed to be a local and perhaps temporary expedient, became a permanent office, that of deacon, in the churches. (Phil. 1 : 1; 1 Tim. 3 : 8.) These officers of the Jerusalem church appear to have been styled, “The Seven” by way of pre-eminence and with reference to their original number. (21 : 8.) The office in other churches, which this first appointment appears to have originated, was called *Deacon* from the word denoting their *service*. Their qualifications, mentioned by Paul (1 Tim. 3 : 8-13), are similar to those here given. In hierarchical churches deacons constitute the third order of clerical officers, and are empowered to preach and baptize. But “the seven” were chosen to the

service of tables in distinction from preaching the word. And in the qualifications prescribed by Paul “aptness to teach” is omitted, and those qualities are emphasized which especially fit for secular duties. Philip, it is true, preached and baptized, but it cannot be shown that he did this as a deacon, for he was an evangelist. (8 : 4-40; 21 : 8.) *Deaconesses* appear also to have existed in some churches. (Rom. 16 : 1; 1 Tim. 3 : 11; Phil. 4 : 3.) While the church was in a certain sense a growth, it was a growth under divine direction. The apostles were inspired to develop the order and the organization of the church (John 16 : 13), and the Acts and the epistles make it plain that it and its ordinances had a well-defined form and order. (14 : 23; 15 : 6 f.; Rom. 6 : 3; 1 Cor. 11 : 2, 20-34; 1 Tim. 3 : 1 f.; Titus 1 : 5.)

4. But we, on our part, will give ourselves continually, that is, give constant attention to prayer, public, and especially private. Peter's long continued prayer on the roof at Joppa is a commentary on this. (10 : 9, 10.) See Paul's reference in his epistles to his almost ceaseless prayers in behalf of his brethren in different churches. (Rom. 10 : 9; 1 Cor. 1 : 4-8; Eph. 1 : 16; Phil. 1 : 3; Col. 1 : 3; 1 Thess. 1 : 2.) In Peter's two epistles we have an example of his **ministry, or service, of the word**, rather than of prayer. As the seven were to be *ministers, or deacons*, at the tables, so they, the apostles, would be *ministers or deacons* of the word, preaching publicly and from house to house. (20 : 20, 21.)

5. And the saying, the speech proposing the plan, **pleased the whole multitude**, was unanimously adopted by the church. **Stephen** means a *crown*, especially of a conqueror, a fitting name for the first Christian martyr. It has been inferred from the fact that all the seven have Greek names that they all belonged to the Hellenist or Grecian Jewish party, but this, though very probable, is uncertain. After the time of Alexander,

canor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and 6 Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch; whom they set before the apostles; and ^fwhen they had prayed, ^gthey laid *their* hands on them.

7 And ^hthe word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company ⁱof the priests were obedient to the faith.

^f ch. 1: 21. ^g ch. 8: 17; 9: 17; 13: 3; 1 Tim. 4: 14; 5: 22. ^h ch. 12: 24. ⁱ John 12: 42.

Greek names among the Jews were common, and were borne by two of the apostles. Stephen and Philip are the only members of the seven again mentioned in the New Testament, and of the others nothing further is known.

Full of faith and the Holy Spirit. See on ver. 3, where instead of *faith* is wisdom. But faith is a foundation grace, and wisdom or spiritual prudence is a fruit of faith. (See ver. 8, 10; 11: 21.)

Stephen is mentioned first and described more fully, because he soon became the leading character in the discussions held with foreign Jews, and the principal object of hate and persecution. One object of this chapter is to introduce Stephen preparatory to his defence and martyrdom. **Philip, lover of horses,** may be mentioned second, because after Stephen his work as an evangelist is to be noticed.

Prochorus, meaning *leader of the choral dance*. **Nicanor** means *conqueror*. **Timon**—*honorable*. **Parmenas**—*steadfast*. **Nicolas, conqueror of the people, a proselyte of Antioch.** He was a Gentile who had embraced Judaism, and had been converted to Christ. (See 2: 11.) A tradition connects with his name that of the Nicolaitans so severely denounced in Rev. 2: 6, 15, but this is unproved, and generally discredited by scholars. *Antioch* was doubtless the capital of Syria, a city of more than five hundred thousand inhabitants, situated on the river Orontes, fifteen miles from its mouth, and about three hundred miles north of Jerusalem. Nicolas may have gone there, when the disciples were scattered abroad. (See 11: 19-22, 26.)

6. Whom they, the multitude of believers, having chosen them from their own number (ver. 5), **set before the apostles** both for their approval and their confirmation. **When they had prayed**—or, *praying*—**they laid their hands on them**—the two acts probably being performed at once. **They prayed,** recognizing their depend-

ence on God, and invoking his sanction and blessing and the bestowment of those gifts necessary for performing the duties of their office. *They laid their hands on them,* not to communicate the Holy Spirit (8: 17), for they were already full of the Spirit, but to sanction the choice of the church, recognizing them as suitable persons for the office, and thus solemnly setting them apart for their work. Two instances besides this of setting apart to a church service, and commonly styled ordination, are found in the New Testament, that of Barnabas and Saul (13: 1-3), and that of Timothy (1 Tim. 4: 14). Added to these is the injunction of Paul to Timothy (1 Tim. 5: 22), "Lay hands suddenly on no man." From an examination of these it will appear that ordination confers no new grace or power; for the ordained person was selected because the church saw in him the qualifications requisite for the office; and a solemn public sanction and recognition for the office was made by the laying on of the hands, with prayer, invoking God's blessing and consecrating him to the work. Dr. Hackett finely remarks: "It was of the nature of a prayer that God would bestow the necessary gifts, rather than a pledge that they were actually conferred."

7. Peace and harmony in the church is followed by great prosperity. The two departments of church work are now attended to thoroughly. Renewed zeal and activity prevail, **and the word of God increased**—the gospel was spreading among the people, and gaining strength as a system of doctrine. **The disciples multiplied**—*were increasing in Jerusalem exceedingly*. The progress was not limited to a few days, but was continuous. A surprising evidence of this internal and external growth was, that **a great company, or multitude, of the priests were obedient to the faith**. Obedience includes repentance.

Stephen's zeal; his violent apprehension.

8 AND Stephen, full of faith and power,

did great wonders and miracles among the people.

faith, and submission to Christ's requirements. (1 Peter 1 : 2, 22; 4 : 17; Rom. 6 : 17.) This new and large accession to the church was wonderful, because the priests had been especially opposed to the gospel (4 : 1; Luke 23 : 4, 5, 23; Mark 15 : 31), and after this were among its active persecutors. (9 : 14; 22 : 30; 26 : 10.) The Spirit, however, is able to overcome the greatest obstacles. The rending of the veil of the temple, the report of the guard to the truth of the resurrection of Jesus, the conciliatory conduct of Gamaliel, and the miraculous gifts and powers of the apostles doubtless all contributed somewhat to this end. The large number converted is not at all incredible. Four thousand, two hundred and eighty-nine priests returned from the captivity with Ezra (Ezra 2 : 36-39), and at this time the number must have been very largely increased. A great multitude of them might be converted, yet multitudes be left behind. "**The faith**—faith system—that is, the gospel. (See Rom. 1 : 5; Gal. 1 : 23.) This mode of epitomizing the plan of salvation confirms the Protestant view of it, in opposition to that of the Roman Catholics. (See Rom. 11 : 6.)" (DR. HACKETT.) This appears to have been the highest point of popularity attained by the church at Jerusalem. The Sadducean attempts at persecution had been checked; the people were accepting the gospel in large numbers; the priest were being won to the faith, and the conversion of Israel seemed more and more promising. But the development of gospel truth in the testimony of Stephen aroused the bitter hostility of the foreign Jews and the opposition of the Pharisees, culminating in the death of Stephen, the cruel persecution that followed, and the scattering abroad of believers from Jerusalem.

8-15. THE ZEAL AND VIOLENT APPREHENSION OF STEPHEN. It is interesting to trace the events which culminated in the apprehension and death of Stephen. Only an outline can here be given. There were two attempts at persecution before that which arose upon Stephen: (1) The one after

the healing of the lame man by Peter and John, probably a few months after Pentecost, in the autumn of A. D. 30. (2) The other after the great increase of the church following the death of Ananias and Sapphira, about A. D. 32 or 33. Both of these proved failures, because (1) They were started by the less influential sect of the Sadducees. (2) The more influential Pharisees stood aloof. (3) The power of the Lord was with the disciples. (4) They were popular with the people. The things which tended to bring about a general persecution were: (1) The disciples became more distinct in their organization and more separate in their gatherings. (2) They advanced in doctrine; and thus came into direct conflict with Pharisees as well as Sadducees. Stephen appears to have proclaimed these doctrines most distinctly, and that too to the strictest of the sect. Hence his arrest, trial, and death. See note at the end of the preceding verse, and the notes that follow.

8. **Stephen** becomes now the central figure; a leader among the Seven, as Peter had been among the Twelve. **Full of faith**—rather, according to the best manuscripts, *of grace*, the blessed influences of the Holy Spirit, including the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5 : 22); and outwardly manifested in **power**, supernatural gifts, including the working of miracles. Compare what is said of Jesus, "full of grace and truth." (John 1 : 14.) Stephen was eminently Christ-like. **Did**, rather, *was doing*, **great wonders and miracles**, or *signs*, **among the people**. These were not performed at one time, but repeatedly, as he went about discharging the duties of his office. Doubtless among the sick and suffering as he ministered to the poor. This is the first instance of miracles performed by any Christian outside of the apostles. It was also an early fulfillment of Christ's promise in Mark 16 : 17, 18.

9. **Then there arose**—*but there started up*, the words bringing to view a somewhat sudden and unexpected arising. **Synagogue**—an assembly for

9 Then there arose certain of the synagogue which is called the *synagogue* of the

Libertines, and ^kCyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and of

^k ch. 2 : 10.

offering prayers and for reading and expounding the Scriptures, held every Sabbath and feast-day, and also on the second and fifth days of every week. Synagogues seem to date their origin from the Babylonish exile. In the time of Christ and the apostles every town, not only in Palestine, but wherever there was a considerable number of Jewish inhabitants, had at least one synagogue, and the larger towns several or even many. In Jerusalem, according to the rabbins, there were four hundred and eighty synagogues to accommodate foreign Jews who visited the temple. In view of the two and a half millions of Jews who came to Jerusalem, from all countries to celebrate the pass-over (*Josephus Antiq.* vi. 9, 3), this number will not seem too large; though all of them may not have been formally organized for holding trials and inflicting punishment. (9 : 2; Matt. 10 : 17.) They appear to have been independent of each other. **Libertines**—*freedmen*, Jews whose fathers were carried captive to Rome by Pompey about B. C. 53, afterward freed by their masters, and allowed to retain their religion, and while living at Rome may have had their synagogue at Jerusalem. These Jewish freedmen were expelled from Italy, on account of their religion, by Tiberius, A. D. 19. It is very probable that part of these exiles returned to Jerusalem, and were the more watchful against any innovations upon the religion for which they had suffered. Some have maintained that Libertines were Jews from a place in Africa, called Libetum, but of this there is no proof, and the existence of such a town is uncertain. The explanation, **which was called**, or *so-called*, Dr. Hackett suggests is inserted here because this was an unusual designation.

How many synagogues are here mentioned has been a subject of discussion. Some suppose but one, composed of freedmen from Cyrene, Alexandria, Cilicia, and Asia; others suppose two, one including the first three names, the others, the last two. But the simpler

and more natural interpretation supposes five. **Cyrenians**—from Cyrene, a large city in North Africa, a fourth part of whose inhabitants, according to Josephus, were Jews. Simon who carried the cross of Jesus was from Cyrene. (Matt. 27 : 32.) Jews from parts about Cyrene were present at Pentecost. (2 : 10.) Cyrenian Jews are mentioned in 11 : 20; 13 : 1. **Alexandrians**—from Alexandria, the great city of Egypt, and at that time the second city of the Roman Empire, where about one hundred thousand Jews resided, having their own quarter, their own governor and laws. **Cilicia**—a Roman province in the south-eastern corner of Asia Minor. The great highway of travel between Europe, western Asia Minor, and Syria ran through this province and gave it importance. Through the Cilician gates, a gap in the Taurus range, the armies of the younger Cyrus, of Alexander, and of the Romans passed; and through it also runs the modern caravan road between Tarsus and the west. Among the Cilicians who disputed with Stephen was probably Saul of Tarsus. (21 : 39.) **Asia**—the Roman province, having Ephesus as its capital. (See 2 : 9.)

Disputing with Stephen—implying that these foreign Jews began the debate, questioning him perhaps at first, discussing the matter, and ending, on their part, in a heated disputation. He very likely met them as friends and acquaintances of the Grecian Jews among whom he ministered. Beginning privately, it at length became public. He doubtless at times spoke in synagogues and public assemblies. We would infer this from the description of him in ver. 5. Before his choice among the seven, he may have been what is sometimes called in these days a lay preacher. And after entering upon his office, like Philip, he may have become also an evangelist. The fact that strong nationality had brought these foreign Jews to Jerusalem, to reside there, explains how they would be the strongest adherents to Judaism,

10 Asia, disputing with Stephen. ¹And they were not able to resist the wisdom and ²the spirit by which he spake.

11 ^aThen they suborned men, which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and against God.

¹ch. 5:39; Matt. 10:19, 20; Luke 21:15; see Exod. 4:12; Isa. 54:17.

²1 Cor. 2:4.

^a1 Kings 21:10-13.

and to the strictest sect, the Pharisees, and thus the foremost in resisting Stephen, concerning the superiority of the New over the Old Dispensation. Foreign influences may have had an opposite effect on Stephen, or, like Saul of Tarsus, enlightened by the Spirit, he may, like a pendulum, have swung toward the other extreme.

At this point began the open and organized opposition of the Pharisees to Christians. Previous to this, Christianity had appeared as a sort of reformed Judaism. There appeared but a single change in the Jewish faith. Instead of a Messiah yet to come, was substituted a Messiah already come, who had lived, died, and risen again. Two rites had been added,—baptism and the Lord's Supper. The disciples met on the first day of the week to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. But they still observed the Jewish Sabbath. They circumcised their children, were daily in the temple, and observed the Jewish ritual. They were still Jews in faith and practice, though theirs was a glorified Judaism by their faith in a risen and exalted Saviour. Jesus had indeed taught the coming of a universal religion (John 4:23, 24.), but this the apostles had very imperfectly comprehended. They doubtless expected that the blessings of the gospel would be extended to men of all nations, but only through the gate of proselytism. There was a providence in this very short-sightedness. A too early proclamation of the spiritual and universal character of Christianity would, no doubt, have brought upon the church persecution before it had gathered strength to meet it. But the time had now come for a fuller proclamation of these great truths and for the fiery ordeal. In both of these Stephen is the leader.

10. The wisdom and the spirit—a variation of the phrases in ver. 3, 5, 8. The Holy Spirit is here meant, and the wisdom is that which the Spirit imparted to Stephen. The words of

Jesus were fulfilled (Luke 21:15): "I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist." Calvin says: "Thus in our own age the Spirit has been so mighty in the mouth of the martyrs who were hurried to the torturing flame, and down to this hour affords such force that, even when they were uneducated men, they, by their simple speech left the highest theologians of the Papacy dumb, as if thunderstruck." Compare Paul at Antioch, in Pisidia, where the Jews, unable to answer Paul, could do nothing but contradict and blaspheme. (13:45.)

11. Then—at that time, just after what had occurred. **Suborned**—privately instructed, *instigated*, **men**, as to what they should do and say. It is not necessary to suppose that bribes were used, though such may have been the case. **We have heard him speak blasphemous words.** What these words were are told in ver. 14. And so was Jesus accused. (Mark 2:7; Matt. 26:65.) *Blasphemy* was speaking against, reviling, or railing against God and divine things. It was regarded under Jewish law as an attempt to turn away the people from their allegiance to the one true God, and hence as treason, and was punishable with death by stoning. (Lev. 24:11-23; Deut. 13:6-10.) **Against Moses**—against the laws given by him, not only those contained in the five books, but also the traditions which they maintained were handed down from Moses. And to speak against Moses was to speak **against God**, for God spake through Moses. The charge indicates his teaching—that he had announced the transitory nature of the Jewish laws, temple, and worship, and the introduction of a new and better covenant, and thus in a striking manner anticipated what was more fully proclaimed by the apostle Paul.

12. The foreign Jews, unable to meet Stephen in argument, resorted to

12 And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon him, and caught him, and brought him 13 to the council, and set up false witnesses, which said, This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this 14 holy place, and the law: for we have

heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall ^odestroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us. And all that sat in the council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.

^o Dan. 9 : 26.

P Exod. 34 : 29, 30.

foul means, and stirred up, aroused with excitement, the people, who before this had treated believers with favor (2 : 47 ; 4 : 17 ; 5 : 26), and with them the elders and the scribes (see on 4 : 5) and coming upon him suddenly, seized him violently, and brought him into the very midst of the council, or Sanhedrin. We may suppose the Sanhedrin just convening. The charge of blasphemy was well fitted to prejudice the people against Stephen. It was important for the rulers to have them on their side. A change in public opinion occurred in the last week of our Saviour's life, the people welcoming him with Hosannas, and soon after crying, "Crucify him." *The people*—powerful in numbers. *The elders*—powerful in authority. *The scribes*—powerful in learning." (BENGEL.)

13. Set up false witnesses—perhaps some of the suborned men, or those under their influence. They were false witnesses in that they unfairly and perversely reported what Stephen had said, thereby giving a wrong meaning and producing a false impression. **Blasphemous** is not found in the oldest manuscripts and should be omitted. The idea of blasphemy, however, is implied (Luke 12 : 10.) Instead of *Moses and God* (ver. 11) we have now the words **this holy place**, the temple, in which they were now assembled, the centre of the worship and the glory of the Jew, and of the law of Moses, which came from God. To speak against these was indeed to speak against God and holy things; and this Stephen was represented as doing continuously. **This man ceaseth not to speak.** (See John 11 : 48-52.)

14. Now for the proof of the terrible charge: For we have heard him say, professing to be ear-witnesses, that this Jesus, the Nazarene,

uttered contemptuously, **shall destroy this place**, this temple and city, **and shall change the customs**, the usages and rites prescribed by law, **which Moses delivered to us**, in his writings and through oral traditions. "Every slander," Bengel says, "lays hold of some portion of truth." Stephen taught that the New Dispensation was superior to the Old and was designed to supersede it, not that they were antagonistic, but rather one preparatory to the other. Sound-ing a note of warning against the unbelief and opposition of the rulers, he may have used words from the discourse of Jesus regarding the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world. Such words could easily be perverted and distorted by the enemies of Stephen. So the false witnesses against Jesus charged that he said: "I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands" (Mark 14 : 58 ; John 2 : 19), a misquotation, a misapplication of his language and a misapprehension of his meaning. In Stephen's case the truth, such as in 7 : 48-50, probably gave rise to the accusation. His accusers may have used his words, but slightly misquoting them, taking them out of their connection and falsifying their spirit. A half truth became a whole lie. Compare the charges against Paul (21 : 21, 28 ; 24 : 5, 6 ; 25 : 7, 8), indicating the similarity of the teachings of Stephen and Paul.

15. All that sat, or sitting, in the council—high-priests and chief priests, elders and scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees, members of the Sanhedrin, besides Stephen's accusers, the false witnesses and perhaps spectators. **Looking steadfastly, or intently**—a strong emphatic expression, the same as used in 1 : 10 ; 7 : 55. Stephen was the principal object of every one's gaze, because he was about to answer the

charges preferred against him; and also there was something about his manner and person that increasingly attracted their attention. **Saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.** There was a supernatural glow and brightness upon his countenance, like the shining face of Moses when he came down from the mount. (Exod. 34 : 35. See Luke 2 : 29.) "The comparison was an unusual one, and the Jews supposed the visible appearance of angels to correspond with their superhuman rank. (See 1 : 10; Matt. 28 : 3; Luke 24 : 4; Rev. 18 : 1, etc.)" (DR. HACKETT.) The meaning is that there was something superhuman and celestial about his appearance. The Holy Spirit shone, as it were, through him, attesting him as a true witness of Christ and the New Covenant (1 Peter 4 : 13, 14), and as truly God's servant as was Moses. "Moses' face shone with the law; Stephen's with the Gospel. Moses was bright when he came down from earthly Sinai. Stephen was bright ere he ascended to the heavenly Zion. . . . The eyes of the council were turned Stephenward, and the eyes of Stephen were turned Christward. The glory of the throne beamed from his eyes as the splendor of the sun shines back from rolling planets through a sky of darkness." (T. A. T. HANNA.)

PRACTICAL REMARKS.

1. Church troubles arise from human imperfections, and can be best overcome by a calm, gentle, just, and generous treatment. (Ver. 1-3; Rom. 15 : 1; 1 Cor. 8 : 9; Gal. 6 : 1.)

2. Gospel preachers should devote themselves to the word, and ought not to be impeded by the secular cares of the church, or by pecuniary anxiety. (Ver. 2; 1 Tim. 4 : 15; 1 Cor. 2 : 1-5.)

3. The special duty of deacons is to care for the secular affairs of the church. As deacons they are not appointed to preach or administer the ordinances. (Ver. 3.)

4. If the preacher would be in the highest degree successful, he must devote himself much and earnestly to prayer. Luther sometimes would say, "I shall have so much to

do, that I cannot do with less than three hours of prayer." (Ver. 4; 1 Tim. 2 : 1.)

5. The Scriptural form of church government is congregational. Under Christ the authoritative power is with the membership. (Ver. 4, 5; Matt. 18 : 17; 1 Cor. 5 : 1-5; 2 Cor. 2 : 6, 7; 1 Cor. 14 : 40 : 16 : 3.)

6. Jesus did not at once give a fully organized and complete church. The discipleship were not prepared for it. He empowered his inspired apostles to complete its organization, as the Spirit and providence might direct. (Ver. 6; John 16 : 12, 13.)

7. The gospel is adapted to all classes and conditions of men. (Ver. 7; Rom. 1 : 16; Col. 3 : 11.)

8. United and earnest labor in all departments of church work will generally be followed by prosperity, and the increase of disciples. (Ver. 7; 15 : 30; 16 : 5.)

9. He who is faithful in whatever the Lord gives him to do will receive enlargement and more important trusts. (Ver. 8, Luke 16 : 10; 1 Tim. 3 : 13.)

10. They who are most bitter in controversy are generally the least qualified for it, mentally, religiously, or in their knowledge of the subject. (Ver. 9; 1 Tim. 3 : 4.)

11. The seven were appointed to oversee temporal matters. But God called some of them to higher spiritual work; Philip to be an evangelist (21 : 8); Stephen to take a step beyond Peter in unfolding the prophecies and the plan of salvation, and to be the first martyr. (Ver. 10; ch. 7.)

12. Hatred and prejudice against the truth will lead men to prevent it and to use the foulest means against it. (Ver. 11-13; 13 : 45; 17 : 5, 13.)

13. Stephen formed the connecting link between Peter and Paul. He taught that a New Dispensation had come, and that Jewish rites were to give way to a more spiritual worship. (Ver. 13, 14; ch. 7.)

14. Christianity is from God. No array of numbers, talents, or learning can refute its claims, or meet its arguments. (Ver. 10-14; Titus 1 : 9; 1 Cor. 1 : 25.)

15. Stephen with his angelic countenance was himself an evidence to the power of the Holy Spirit, and to the spirituality and glory of that religion he proclaimed. (Ver. 15; 2 Cor. 3 : 2, 3, 18.)

CH. 7: THE SPEECH OF STEPHEN has given rise to much discussion and much misunderstanding. To the superficial reader it may appear rambling and lacking point, but to the close observer and prayerful student a thread of truth underlies the whole, upon which is strung a skillfully arranged historic argument. The *authenticity* of the speech appears from its nature and contents. Who would have thought to put such a defence into Stephen's mouth? Tradition would have made it more pointed and argumentative throughout, and more directly related to the charges in ch. 6, and the question in ver. 1. The *report* of the speech seems to have come from an ear-witness, possibly from some silent friend of Jesus, as Nicodemus, or more probably from Saul of Tarsus, upon whom Stephen seems to have made a life-long impression. (22: 20.) The *peculiarities* of the speech: (1) It is unfinished, having been broken off suddenly. (2) It is historic in form and in argument. Thus he gained the attention of his hearers, softened their prejudices, showed that he was a full believer in the Scriptures, and revered the God of Israel. At the same time he brought to view great fundamental truths in God's dealings with men, and prepared the way for announcing Jesus as the Messiah and applying his address to his hearers. (3) It was a presentation of positive truths, a vindication not so much of himself as of the great doctrines which he had maintained. (4) He weaves into his Scriptural address certain things from Jewish tradition. In this he followed the popularly-received history of his time as is shown from Philo and Josephus, who in some instances accord with him. These apparent discrepancies will be noticed in the verses where they belong. With these compare Author's *Harmonic Acts*, § 12, notes. (5) In passing rapidly over the history, Stephen leaves much to be supplied, and he so presents his facts as to allow his hearers to silently infer and make the application. We would need to put ourselves in the exact situation, modes of thought and surroundings of both speaker and hearers, in order to appreciate the force of the

speech as a part and a whole. (6) The Spirit element of the speech must not be overlooked. Stephen was full of the Spirit and under his direction, and therefore his address must have been modified and somewhat shaped thereby. This with the fact that it is recorded and handed down to us, indicates that it fills an important place in the progressive revelation of truth, and deserves our most careful study.

THE SPEECH ITSELF. Its structure and purpose have been hinted above. The teaching of Stephen had been assailed, and he had been charged with blasphemy against the temple and Moses. (6: 13, 14.) His speech was a *defence* by showing *what he did teach*. He seems to have caught above all others the meaning of our Lord's words, "The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for such the Father seeks to worship him. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship in spirit and in truth." (JOHN 4: 21-24.) Thus he so presents the facts regarding the patriarchs, Moses, the tabernacle, and the temple as to show his innocence of the charge of blasphemy, and at the same time indicate that in every age God had recognized the spiritual worshiper and required spiritual worship, and that this was not limited to any time or place. Abraham was called before the rite of circumcision was given, and the patriarchs unto Moses worshiped God before the tabernacle and the giving of the law. The tabernacle was a movable tent going with the children of Israel, and was never designed to be permanent. After hundreds of years God granted the earnest request of David, and permitted Solomon to build him a house. But in allowing this God did not ignore the great truth that his worship could not be limited to a single place, that heaven was his throne, that any where on the earth the true worshiper could approach him, and that indeed the humble heart was a temple in which God condescended to dwell. All these were parts of that progressive revelation of truth preparatory to the full revelation by him whom Moses foretold; and the tabernacle and the tem-

Stephen's defence before the Sanhedrin, and his death.

7 THEN said the high priest, Are these things so?

2 And he said, ^aMen, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory ^bappeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt

^a ch. 22 : 1.

^b Gen. 12 : 1.

ple were but a repeated type of the grander temple of God's universal worship under the Messiah.

At the same time Stephen had shown the perversity of their fathers. Joseph had been evil entreated and sold by his brethren; Moses had been rejected in Egypt and afterward forsaken in the wilderness by Israel when they made a calf. Turning from the law, their fathers had gone into idolatry. Thus Stephen showed, on the one hand, that so far from blaspheming the temple and Moses, he was teaching the great spiritual truths recognized by God in all ages, foretold by Moses, and typified by the tabernacle and the temple. And on the other hand that his accusers were only following in the footsteps of the fathers who rejected God's messengers and forsook his law. Here Stephen hastens to his application, caused perhaps by the looks of his judges. Had he gone on, he would very likely have shown how the predictions of the prophets were fulfilled in Jesus, and presented him as a Saviour able to save his crucifiers and murderers. But he sees his hearers are incorrigible; and with a sudden burst of righteous indignation he charges them with resisting the Holy Spirit even as their fathers did; and as their fathers had murdered the prophets so they had murdered the Righteous One of whom the prophets had spoken.

This address has been compared with that in Luke 4 : 24-29, in which Jesus hinted at the universality of the gospel, with like effect upon his audience. The indications are that Stephen spoke in Greek. He is generally regarded as a Hellenist, or Grecian Jew, and his quotations from the Old Testament generally agree with the Greek version. The prevalence of the Greek language was so general in Palestine, and especially in Jerusalem, at that time, that he could have been easily understood by the Sanhedrin.

1. Then, rather, *And*, connecting

this verse closely to the preceding chapter. **The high priest**, the president of the Sanhedrin, questions the prisoner. So he had done to Jesus. (Matt. 26 : 62.) While the Sanhedrin are gazing upon the brightened countenance of Stephen, the high priest breaks the silence by asking, **Are these things**, alleged by his accusers (6 : 11-14), **so?** Under Jewish law the accused had a right to be heard in his own defence. Pleaders were unknown to the Jewish courts. Compare Paul before the Sanhedrin (23 : 1), and also before a Roman tribunal. (25 : 8.) The following discourse is in answer to this question, and must contain a refutation of this charge. In order to apprehend its parts more clearly, it will be divided into sections.

2-16. **THE PATRIARCHAL AGE, IN WHICH WERE FORETOLD BONDAGE AND DELIVERANCE.** God with Abraham before circumcision and with his descendants before the giving of the law. (Gen. 12 : 1 ; 15 : 13-16 ; 37 : 11 ; 39 : 2 ; 42 : 2 ; 45 : 1-4 ; Josh. 24 : 32.)

2. **Men**, addressing all, both brethren, the spectators, and fathers, the members of the Sanhedrin. Thus Stephen begins with conciliatory terms of respect and reverence. See the same beginning by Paul in 22 : 1. **Hearken**—attentively and patiently. (13 : 16 ; 22 : 1.) **The God of glory**—a fitting beginning of one whose soul was filled with the Spirit, and upon whose countenance was reflected gleams of the divine glory. Literally, *The God of the glory*, that which was peculiar to him, the visible splendor, the cloud of glory, symbol of his presence, in which he appeared unto his people (Exod. 40 : 34 ; Lev. 9 : 6 ; Ezek. 1 : 28 ; Heb. 9 : 5), and who dwells, as Paul says, "in the light which no man can approach unto." (1 Tim. 6 : 16.) By this reverential reference to God, Stephen at once begins to counteract the report that he had spoken blasphemous words against God. (6 : 11.) His mind, too, is filled with the views of that majesty and glorious sover-

3 'in Charran, and said unto him, 'Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I 4 shall show thee.' Then 'came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in

Charran; and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into 5 this land, wherein ye now dwell. "And he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on: " yet he

* Gen. 11 : 31. † Gen. 12 : 4, 5. ‡ Gen. 23 : 4.

* Gen. 12 : 7; 13 : 15; 15 : 13, 18; 17 : 8; 26 : 3.

eignty which God had exercised in appearing to his people, from the days of Abraham to Christ, the most glorious manifestation of himself. (Heb. 1 : 1, 2; John 1 : 14.) **Appeared**, revealing some of his splendor and majesty to **Abraham** as the God of glory. Notice that Stephen says **our father Abraham**, thus giving honor and recognizing relationship to the founder of their race. So far from blaspheming, he virtually says, I honor the fathers and acknowledge God's glory revealed to them. **Mesopotamia**—meaning *between the rivers*, the region between the Tigris and Euphrates. Abraham first resided at Ur, of the Chaldees (Gen. 11 : 28), probably the modern Mugheir, about six miles west of the present channel of the Euphrates, and one hundred and twenty-five miles from its mouth. **Charran**—*Haran* (Gen. 11 : 31), in the northwestern part of Mesopotamia, on the bank of a small tributary of the Euphrates, the river Belik.

3. And said unto him, Get thee out, etc. Quoted from Gen. 12 : 1, where the call in Haran is meant. But Stephen here speaks of a previous call of Abraham, "before he dwelt in Haran." But the discrepancy is only apparent. An earlier call at Ur is implied in Gen. 15 : 7; Neh. 9 : 7. The object and import of both calls were the same, and the words of these calls would be substantially alike. Notice the words "from thy father's house" (Gen. 12 : 1) are omitted here. When Abram removed from Ur his father went with him, but when he left Haran he left his brother Nahor and his father's house. (Josh. 24 : 2.) This is in harmony with Gen. 11 : 31, where it is related that Abram starts from Ur to go into the land of Canaan, but was delayed at Haran. With this, also, Philo agrees, who speaks of these two calls. "A beautiful comment is afforded by the last clause of the parallel passage in Heb. 11 : 8, 'he went out, not know-

ing whither he went.'" (J. A. ALEXANDER.)

4. The land of the Chaldeans—the southern portion of Mesopotamia, including a part of the low country west of the Euphrates. It is implied here that Chaldea did not then extend so far north as to include Haran. **When his father was dead.** But his father Terah died at the age of two hundred and five (Gen. 11 : 32), and in Gen. 11 : 26 it is said that "Terah lived seventy years and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran," and in Gen. 12 : 4 that Abram was seventy-five when he came forth from Haran. This would make Abraham's departure to have been sixty years before Terah's death. This difficulty is readily removed by supposing that Abram was not the oldest son, but the youngest, and named first because of his importance in Hebrew history. Such is the view of some Jewish writers. Similarly Shem is mentioned first among Noah's sons, (Gen. 5 : 32), yet Japheth was the oldest. (Gen. 10 : 21; 9 : 24.) This explanation would make Terah one hundred and thirty years old when Abram was born. This agrees well with the Jewish tradition that Sarah, Abram's wife, ten years younger than he, was his niece, the daughter of Haran; and also with the marriage of Isaac with Rebecca, Nahor's granddaughter, through Beth-nel, the eighth son of Nahor. (Gen. 22 : 23.) **He removed him.** *He*, that is, God, caused him to remove into this land by renewing the command. Thus Stephen continues to recognize the God of glory (ver. 1) as behind Abram, directing him.

5. None inheritance . . . not so much as to set his foot on—*not even a foot breadth*. How does this agree with his purchase of the field and cave of Machpelah at Hebron? Meyer explains that this "refers only to the first period of Abraham's residence in Palestine before the institution of circumcision (ver. 8) while the purchase of

promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, 6 when *as yet* he had no child. And God spake on this wise, 'That his seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat *them* evil: four hundred years.

7 And the nation to whom they shall be in bondage will I judge, said God; and after that shall they come forth' and 8 ^a 'serve me in this place.' ^b And he gave him the covenant of circumcision; and so Abraham begat Isaac, and circumcised him the eighth day; ^c and Isaac begat

⁷ Exod. 12 : 40; Gal. 3 : 17. ^a Exod. ch. 7 to ch. 14; Ps. 136 : 10-15. ^b Exod. 3 : 12. ^c Gen. 17 : 9-14. ^d Gen. 21 : 2-4. ^e Gen. 25 : 21-26.

the field falls much later." Abraham, however, received no inheritance and he purchased none, but only a burial place. (Gen. 23 : 20.) Yet God **promised** the land to him and his descendants when **he had no child**. Ishmael was not born, and Isaac till after Abram had sojourned in Palestine twenty-five years. (Gen. 17 : 1, 25; 21 : 5.) Thus the strong faith of Abram, both for the child and the inheritance is implied, and that both of these were the free gift of God. And this great promise and this great faith were while Abram was yet uncircumcised. (See Paul's reasoning in Rom. 4 : 9-12; Gal. 3 : 15-19.)

6. God spake on this wise. To Abram (Gen. 15 : 13, 14) and to Moses—last clause in next verse (Exod. 3 : 17), quoted freely from the Septuagint Version. Stephen's language implies that he does not quote exactly. **Four hundred years**—a round number, about that time. From the birth of Isaac to the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt was four hundred and five years. In Exod. 12 : 40, the sojourning of Israel in Egypt is said to have been four hundred and thirty years, and Paul, in Gal. 3 : 17, makes the entire period between the arrival of Abram in Canaan to the giving of the law, in round numbers, to be four hundred and thirty years. A very old solution regards the four hundred and thirty years in Exod. 12 : 40 as including the previous residence in Canaan as well as that in Egypt, as follows: from the promise to the birth of Isaac, twenty-five years; from the birth of Isaac to that of Jacob, sixty years. (Gen. 25 : 26.) Jacob was one hundred and thirty years old when he went down into Egypt. The time in Egypt, two hundred and fifteen years, making a total of four hundred and thirty years. So Josephus in *Antiq.* ii. 15 : 2. The

Septuagint Version and the Samaritan text follow the same computation. Josephus in another place (*Antiq.* ii. 9 : 1) speaks of the Israelites spending four hundred years in Egypt, which would seem to imply that there were two ways of stating the time, and that Josephus did not regard one inconsistent with the other.

7. To the quotation from Gen. 15 : 14, Stephen adds, **and serve me in this place**—which is implied in the promise, that Abraham's descendants would on their return to possess the land serve God who gave it to them. The language, however, is a free quotation and application of Exod. 3 : 12, "Ye shall serve God upon this mountain," referring to the worship which should be offered in the vicinity of Mount Horeb. But Stephen looks beyond Horeb and views the worship and service of God in the returned Israelites in Canaan, which could be traced back to Horeb where it had been renewed and enhanced. To Stephen's audience, who were well acquainted with these facts, various thoughts would be suggested, such as the strong faith of Abraham upon a promise which was to be fulfilled under such circumstances, and so many hundred years after; the service of God not confined to any one place since Abraham and his descendants were sojourners; and not exclusive, since Abraham had been called from among idolaters (Josh. 24 : 2), and as yet was uncircumcised.

8. Stephen passes over fifteen years of Abraham's history, during which time Ishmael had been born, and had grown to a lad of thirteen years. **And** after this long walk of faith, twenty-four years since Abraham came to Canaan, **God gave him**—being an act of free grace on God's part—the **covenant of circumcision**—the institution or arrangement of which

Jacob; and ^eJacob *begat* the twelve patriarchs.

9 ^fAnd the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt; ^gbut God was
10 with him, and delivered him out of all his afflictions, ^hand gave him favour

and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh, king of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house.
11 ⁱNow there came a dearth over all the land of Egypt and Chanaan, and great affliction; and our fathers found no

^e Gen. 29: 31, etc.; 30: 5, etc.; 35: 18, 23-26.
39: 2, 21, 23.

^f Gen. 37: 4, 11, 18-20, 28; Ps. 105: 17. ^g Gen. 41: 37-42; 42: 6. ^h Gen. 41: 54-57.

circumcision was the sign. (Gen. 17: 10, 11; Rom. 4: 11.) **And so**—in accordance with the covenant God gave a son to Abraham, even Isaac, and Abraham complied with the covenant which was obligatory upon him, and circumcised Isaac the eighth day. (Gen. 21: 4.) In the covenant God promised to make Abraham the father of many nations, and required of Abraham and his descendants the observance of the rite of circumcision. **And Isaac begat Jacob**, etc. Literally, *And Isaac, Jacob, and Jacob the twelve patriarchs*, meaning, And Isaac begat and circumcised Jacob, and Jacob begat and circumcised the twelve patriarchs. The covenant of circumcision is the prominent thought and *circumcised* the emphatic word. Thus Stephen notices the change that God made in the outward condition of his chosen people, in which they continued for hundreds of years before the giving of the law, indicating also that the promise and the rite were not dependent on the law. (Gal. 3: 13-18.) Thus also, so far from blaspheming, Stephen reverently recognizes this divinely appointed rite.

9. Stephen passes to the next important change in the condition of the chosen people, their going into Egypt, resulting from the sale of Joseph thither. (Gen. 37: 28.) **Moved with envy**—an envious jealousy. This is the first sin noticed by Stephen, suggestive of the many sins of Israel that followed. **But**, rather *and*, running parallel with the envy and hatred of the patriarchs, his brethren—**God was with him**—as his protector and preserver. Here begins a parallel between faithful leaders and unfaithful people. Stephen has in view the similar malicious treatment of Jesus, the Immanuel, *God with us* (Matt. 1: 23); and in the ill-used Joseph and the rejected Moses, both of whom enjoyed the favor and presence of God and became the

deliverers of the people, he sees types of Christ. This best explains why he devotes so much space to them.

10. This verse explains how God was with Joseph. The account is given in the forty-first chapter of Genesis. **Gave him favor and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh**—through his power in interpreting dreams and managing the affairs and finances of Egypt. Pharaoh said to Joseph, "There is none so discreet and wise as thou art." (Gen. 41: 39.) **Pharaoh**—a common title of the ancient sovereigns of Egypt, signifying *the king*, similar to the "Caesars" of Rome or "the Czar" of Russia. **Governor over Egypt**—*viceroy* or prime minister. **And all his house**, lord chamberlain, holding the second position in the royal household. Thus in civil affairs and the family he was second only to Pharaoh, and practically the ruler of the land. What a foreshadowing did Stephen doubtless see of the exaltation of Jesus at the right hand of the Father!

11. How Joseph became the means of bringing his whole family to Egypt. **A dearth**—still common in the East. For famines in Canaan, see Gen. 12: 10; 21: 6. These were owing to failures in the autumn and spring rains. In Egypt famines are generally owing to a deficiency in the rise of the Nile and to drying winds. All of these causes probably united in Canaan and Egypt in the days of Joseph. (Gen. 41: 54-57.) In A. D. 1064-1071 there was a seven years' famine in Egypt of terrible severity. (Compare Stanley's *Jewish Church*, Lecture IV.) **Our fathers**—Stephen thus recognizes with his hearers relationship and sympathy. **Sustenance**—literally, *fodders* in the plural, here doubtless meaning the various kinds of necessary food for both beast and men. "A scarcity of fodder, to which especially belong the want of cereal fodder, is the most

12 sustenance. ^k But when Jacob heard that there was corn in Egypt, he sent 13 out our fathers first. ^l And at the second time Joseph was made known to his brethren; and Joseph's kindred was made

14 known unto Pharaoh. ^m Then sent Joseph, and called his father Jacob to him, and ⁿ all his kindred, three-score and fifteen souls. ^o So Jacob went down into 16 Egypt, ^p and died, he, and our fathers, and

^k Gen. ch. 42 to ch. 45.

^l Gen. 45 : 4, 16.

^m Gen. 45 : 9, 27.

ⁿ Gen. 46 : 27; Deut. 10 : 22.

^o Gen. 46 : 5.

^p Gen. 49 : 33; Exod. 1 : 6.

urgent difficulty, in the failure of crops, to the possessors of large herds of cattle." (MEYER.)

12. Heard that there was corn—rather *grain*, doubtless referring particularly to wheat for which Egypt was noted in the ancient world. It was the principal granary of Rome in apostolic days. (27 : 6, 38; 28 : 11.) First visit, recorded in Gen. 42 : 1 f.

13. Joseph was made known—*was recognized by his brethren*—upon his saying, "I am Joseph." (Gen 45 : 3.) **Joseph's kindred.** His name is repeated with perhaps patriotic pride, and also emphasizing him as the chief among his brethren, on whom they were dependent. Instead of *kindred* some would translate *race*, as in ver. 19 : 4 : 36. But *family* seems better as in 4 : 6; 13 : 26. (See Thayer's *Lee. of N. T.*) **Made known to Pharaoh.** His race was already known to Pharaoh. (Gen. 41 : 12.) His particular family now became known to him, his brethren with Joseph, and his father still alive in Canaan. (Gen. 45 : 16-20.) No one of the brethren was presented to Pharaoh till afterward. (Gen. 47 : 2.)

14. His kindred—his relations collectively and personally. **Three-score and fifteen souls**—seventy-five. According to the Hebrew text of Gen. 40 : 27; Exod. 1 : 5; Deut. 10 : 22, the number is seventy. But in all of these places the Septuagint Version has seventy-five. In the latter version Gen. 40 : 27 has the interpolation, "And the sons of Joseph born to him in the land of Egypt were nine souls," which may include the five sons of Ephraim and Manasseh afterward born to them. (Num. 26 : 25-37.) These nine added to the sixty-six of Jacob's household that came down into Egypt (Gen. 46 : 26) make seventy-five. Stephen's statement accords with the Greek Version of the Old Testament of this day, and doubtless with the popular understanding of the narrative at that

time. We need not regard his statement as an error. It does not contradict the Hebrew text, but simply adds certain members of Joseph's family not included in the original reckoning. Another way of harmonizing the two statements is to regard the seventy-five to be the number of persons actually sent for. Stephen may have included the wives that came down into Egypt. In that case Joseph and his family would not be included, and Judah's wife was dead; and probably Simeon's wife also, for his youngest son was born of a Canaanitish woman. Thus the nine wives added to the sixty-six descendants of Jacob would give the number required.

15, 16. So, etc., rather, *And Jacob*, connecting this verse with the preceding in a continuative narrative. **And were carried over, etc.,**—*and were removed to Shechem*, a city of great antiquity, located in the valley between Mounts Ebal and Gerizim, about seven miles south of Samaria. The Old Testament records that Jacob was buried at Machpelah (Gen. 50 : 1-14) and that Joseph's body was embalmed and carried out of Egypt and buried at Shechem. (Exod. 13 : 10; Josh. 24 : 32.) Nothing is said of the burial of the other sons of Jacob. (Exod. 1 : 6.) Stephen's account may be regarded as supplemental. Josephus says the sons of Jacob were buried at Hebron; but Rabbinical traditions say that they were buried in Shechem. Jerome, who died at Bethlehem, A. D. 420, says that the tombs of the twelve patriarchs were to be seen at Shechem in his day. Jacob and his sons may all have been buried at first at Hebron, and afterward removed to Shechem. Or *were carried over* may refer only to the sons of Jacob who were buried in Shechem. The Revised Version renders, *They were carried over*, etc. The mention of the burial of the patriarchs in hated Samaria was suggestive of the fact that

¶ were carried over into Sychem, and laid in ^r the sepulchre that Abraham bought for a sum of money of the sons of Emor *the father* of Sychem.

17 But when ^s the time of the promise drew nigh, which God had sworn to Abraham, ^t the people grew and multiplied in Egypt, till another king arose,

¶ Exod. 13 : 19 ; Josh. 24 : 32.

¶ Gen. 22 : 9-20 ; 33 : 19.

¶ Gen. 15 : 13.

¶ Exod. 1 : 7-12 ;

Ps. 105 : 24, 25.

God's people in their burial are not limited to any particular place, and that Samaria had been and might be the abode of God's children.

The sepulchre that Abraham bought, etc. The rest of this verse has given much difficulty. Here it is stated that Abraham bought the tomb of the sons of Hamor in Shechem, but in Gen. 23 : 15, it is said that Abraham bought the cave of Machpelah at Hebron of Ephron the Hittite, and in Gen. 33 : 19, it is said that Jacob bought the field at Shechem, which afterward became a burying place. (Josh. 24 : 32.) Some think that an error had crept into some early manuscript, and that the name Abraham in some way had been substituted for that of Jacob. Or, that neither name was in the original manuscript, and that it read, "in the tomb that one bought," etc., and some officious transcriber, thinking the verb needed a nominative case, put in the name Abraham. Others, however, believe that Abraham purchased or acquired a piece of ground at Shechem, on which he built an altar. (Gen. 12 : 6, 7.) This for many years was occupied by others, but was recovered by Jacob, perhaps by force (Gen. 48 : 22), and more land purchased and an altar built. (Gen. 33 : 19.) That the sons of Hamor appear in both purchases affords no serious difficulty, since five hundred years later we find the same name connected with Shechem. (Judg. 9 : 28.) Either of the above suppositions explains the difficulty. We cannot suppose that Stephen, Luke, or Paul could have been ignorant of the facts in the case. Stephen passed rapidly over history familiar to his hearers, leaving much to be supplied in their own minds. To us who know so little of these events, it is not strange that there are things hard for us to explain. The trouble is in our ignorance, not in Stephen or those who heard him.

Thus far Stephen has shown great

adroitness in his answer to the high priest's question. Tracing the early history of their race, and using almost the exact words of the Scriptures, he indicates his reverence for God, his brotherhood with the Jewish people, and his regard for their institutions. His words also are suggestive of the spirituality and universality of the worship of God, and of the changing forms and circumstances in which at different times and places it may be offered.

17-43. HOW THE PROMISE WAS FULFILLED UNDER MOSES; THE TREATMENT HE RECEIVED. (Exod. 1 : 7, 8, 22 ; 2 : 11-14 ; 3 : 2-10 ; 7 : 3, 4.) God faithfully fulfills his promise, though the people are slow to believe him. The rejected one became the leader and the deliverer of Israel. God protected Moses in infancy, and, after years of providential guidance and training, appears to him in the wilderness, commissions him as a ruler and redeemer, and for forty years gives him success in his leadership. Yet Israel was disobedient to Moses and God.

17. Stephen passes from the times of Joseph to those of Moses. As in the past, God is not confined to outward forms, or times, or places of worship. **But when,** etc., *But as or in proportion as the time of the promise drew near*, implying a progressive increase of the people, in numbers and influence, and consequently in power. They increased more and more rapidly. **Which God had sworn**—according to the oldest and best manuscripts, *which God had declared to Abraham*. (Gen. 15 : 13.)

18. The sentence of preceding verse is completed in this. **Till.** The Israelites were continuing to increase when this king arose, and when he endeavored to put a stop to it. **Another king**—*another kind of king, another dynasty*. Josephus says that "the crown had now come into another family," and that the

19 which knew not Joseph. The same dealt subtilly with our kindred, and evil entreated our fathers, ^aso that they cast out their young children, to the end they might not live.

20 ^aIn which time Moses was born, and ^bwas exceeding fair, and nourished up in

21 his father's house three months; and ^awhen he was cast out, Pharaoh's daughter took him up, and nourished him ^afor 22 her own son. And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was ^bmighty in words and in deeds.

23 ^cAnd when he was full forty years

^a Exod. 1 : 22. ^a Exod. 2 : 2. ^b Heb. 11 : 23. ^c Exod. 2 : 3-10. ^a Heb. 11 : 24. ^b Luke 21 : 19. ^c Exod. 2 : 11-15; Heb. 11 : 25.

Egyptians had "forgotten the benefits they had received from Joseph." (*Antiq.* ii. 9, 1.) Westcott and Hort, following some of the oldest manuscripts, read, *another king over Egypt*. **Knew not Joseph**—who had never seen or known Joseph, and was partially or wholly ignorant of the great benefit of his public services. This might arise from the change of dynasty, the length of time that had intervened since Joseph, and the indifference of this king to those of a former dynasty. (Exod. 1 : 8.) Olshausen, Hackett, and some others, however, take a Hebraistic meaning of the word, and render *who did not regard the merit of Joseph*, was indifferent to his memory and services. (1 Thess. 4 : 12; Sept. Gen. 39 : 6.)

19. Dealt subtilly, craftily with our race, by enslaving them and destroying the male children through the midwives and the Egyptians. (Exod. 1 : 8-22.) **Evil-entreated, oppressed our fathers so that**, rather, *that they might cast out or expose their infants, in order that these might not be preserved alive*. The king of Egypt hoped by bitter oppressions to cause the Israelites to destroy their own children. But in this he failed; and hence he commanded that all the Hebrew male children should be destroyed at birth, or cast into the Nile; and this was to be executed by his Egyptian subjects. (Exod. 1 : 22.) The rendering *so that* is less accordant with the Greek and with history. There is no evidence that the Israelites voluntarily destroyed their own children. If so, why the command of the king to murder them? (Exod. 1 : 16.)

20. In which time, or season, of oppression, very probably when at its height. **Was exceeding fair**—literally, *fair to God*, God being judge. This is a form of a Hebrew superlative. Thus in Hebrew we read of "the

mountains of God," and "the cedars of God," indicative of lofty mountains and towering cedars. The Septuagint (*Jonah* 3 : 2.) calls Nineveh a city "great unto God," that is, an exceeding great city. Both Josephus and Philo relate the traditions regarding the superlative beauty of the child Moses. (*Antiq.* ii. 9, 7, and Philo, *Vit. Mos.* i. p. 604.)

21. When he was cast out, or exposed. Took him up—took him up for herself as her own, implying that she adopted him, an idea brought fully out in the next clause: *and nourished him for herself as a son*.

22. And Moses was learned—rather, *was instructed*. It is not Moses' proficiency, but his education, that is here mentioned. Stephen does not derive this from the Old Testament, but from tradition. The adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter would surely be educated in the learning of the country. Concerning the wisdom of Egypt, see 1 Kings 4 : 30; Isa. 19 : 11-13. The Egyptians cultivated mathematics, natural philosophy, and medicine, gave attention to astronomy, chemistry, geometry, anatomy, and surgery, and were skilled in manufactures, architecture, sculpture, painting and music. **Mighty in word**—rather, according to the best reading, *mighty in his words and deeds*. Moses was indeed inferior to Aaron in mere fluency, and he distrusted his own ability, but he excelled in thought and matter, as his recorded discourses show. (See Deut., especially ch. 27-33.) Tradition makes Moses an inventor of boats, and engines for building, and instruments of war. Josephus relates that when the Ethiopians invaded Egypt, Moses was the general of the army which defeated them. (*Antiq.* ii. 10.)

23. When he was full forty years old. His age is not given in Exod. 2 : 11. The Old Testament sim-

old, it came into his heart to visit his
24 brethren the children of Israel. And
seeing one of them suffer wrong, he de-
fended him, and avenged him that was
25 oppressed, and smote the Egyptian: for
he supposed his brethren would have un-
derstood how that God by his hand
would deliver them: but they understood

26 not. ^d And the next day he showed him-
self unto them as they strove, and would
have set them at one again, saying, Sirs,
^e ye are brethren; why do ye wrong one
27 to another? But he that did his neigh-
bour wrong thrust him away, saying,
^f Who made thee a ruler and a judge over
us? wilt thou kill me, as thou didst the

^d Exod. 2: 13.

^e Gen. 13: 8.

^f Prov. 9: 7.

^g Luke 12: 14.

ply states that he was eighty years old when he stood before Pharaoh (Exod. 7: 1), and one hundred and twenty when he died. (Deut. 34: 7.) Stephen divides the life of Moses into three equal periods of forty years (ver. 30, 36), which agrees with Jewish tradition and current belief. **It came into his heart.** (See the expression in Jer. 3: 16; 32: 35.) "It might seem to have come casually into Moses' mind, and yet Moses was divinely impelled." (BENGEL.) (See Heb. 11: 24.) **To visit his brethren—to look after** them, in order to sympathize with and help them. The verb here used is a very expressive one. (15: 14; Luke 1: 78; Matt. 25: 36; James 1: 27.) "Comparing the language here with that of Luke 1: 68 and Heb. 2: 6, we may see how Moses was a type of Christ and how Christ was a prophet like unto Moses (3: 22), like him leaving a royal court and going out to look after and to redeem those whom he was not ashamed to call brethren. (Heb. 2: 11.)" (ABBOTT.)

24. Wronged—unjustly treated with blows. (Exod. 2: 11.) **Avenged the wrong, vindicated the right. Him that was oppressed,** being overcome and wearied out (2 Peter 2: 7), and almost ready to die; very probably suffering, according to an old opinion, from one of Pharaoh's taskmasters. **Smote the Egyptian** so that he killed him. (Exod. 2: 12.) Moses determined boldly to espouse the cause of God's people, renouncing the advantages of his rank among the Egyptians. (Heb. 11: 25, 26.) He had doubtless been taught his descent and about Israel's God by his mother. (Exod. 2: 9, 10.)

25. For he supposed, etc.—rather, And he was thinking that his brethren understood that God, by his hand, was giving salvation, or deliverance to them, this very act being the beginning of it. But why did Moses thus think? Probably (1) because the

time of deliverance promised to Abraham and predicted by Jacob and Joseph drew nigh. These promises had doubtless been handed down from generation to generation. (2) Because of his providential deliverances and guidance thus far. His own convictions were so deep and clear that he was to be their deliverer that he thinks it must be clear to them. (3) Because of his rank and position at the royal court, which gave him special advantages, and might remind them of Joseph. But notwithstanding the many circumstances and providences pointing to Moses as Israel's deliverer, Stephen adds, **But they understood not.** So the Jews understood not that Jesus was the Christ when he came, notwithstanding the many things that proved him to be the Saviour foretold by the prophets. (John 1: 10, 11.) Notice how Stephen uses the word *salvation*, suggestive of the salvation which he preached through Jesus.

26. Nor was this all; but Moses was rejected the following day, when **he showed himself suddenly, in the character of a leader and deliverer, to them as they strove, quarreling.** Two Israelites. (Exod. 2: 13.) Stephen is brief, since the circumstances were familiar to all. **Would have set them at one again, constrained them by exhortation, urged them to be at peace.** Moses appears to have stopped their strife, at least momentarily. **Sirs, or men, ye are brethren;** hence ye should not fight; your relationship makes it a greater wrong and more unseemly than if you were of different nationalities. (See Gen. 13: 8.)

27. But he that did his neighbor wrong—he who was wronging his neighbor, showing that he was not reconciled, and that the other was acting on the defensive. **Neighbor, one by race a brother. Thrust him,** that is, Moses, away, repelling and repu-

29 Egyptian yesterday? ^b Then fled Moses at this saying, and was a stranger in the land of Madian, where he begat two sons.

30 ⁱ And when forty years were expired, there appeared to him in the wilderness of mount Sina an angel of the Lord in a

^b Exod. 2: 15, 22; 4: 20; 18: 3, 4. ⁱ Exod. 3: 1-10.

diating him as one having no right or authority to interfere. **Who made, appointed, thee a ruler in general, or a judge in particular over us?** The question demands a negative answer, and was thus an emphatic rejection of the claims of Moses. This appears to represent the general feelings of the Israelites toward him. They understood his claims, but not God's intention concerning him, and rejected him. So the Jew understood not, and rejected Christ's authority. (3: 17; 13: 46.)

28. **Wilt thou, etc.** *Thou wilt not surely put me out of the way like as thou didst, etc.*—insinuating his knowledge of what Moses had done and perhaps his secret manner of doing it. (Exod. 2: 12.) So far from acknowledging the authority of Moses, this Israelite accuses Moses of lawless violence and murder. So Jesus was counted among transgressors. (Isa. 53: 8, 9.) Thus Stephen is preparing the way for showing that in their rejection of Christ they were but following the steps of their fathers, always resisting the Holy Spirit. (ver. 51.)

29. **Then fled Moses at this saying**—finding that his own people did not accept him as their leader, and that the facts had come to Pharaoh's ears, who sought to slay him. (Exod. 2: 19.) "Pharaoh's court was, of course, no longer a home for the patriot, who loved his own oppressed people better than the splendid future of an Egyptian prince. (Heb. 11: 25)" (DR. J. S. HOWSON.) His expectations of leadership were blasted, and during an exile for forty years, enduring the hardships of a humble shepherd, the early conviction that he was to be the appointed deliverer of his people faded quite away from his mind. But his youthful ambition and self-confidence were checked, and he was taught that meekness which was ever afterward his marked characteristic. (Num. 12: 3.) At the first Moses undertook to deliver (Exod. 2: 12) and he expected the Israelites to receive him with gratitude. But afterward God

declares himself to be the deliverer, and Moses his agent (Exod. 3: 8-10), who undertakes it with humility and self-distrust. **And was a stranger—became a sojourner**, like the patriarchs, without a permanent home or country. **The land of Midian**—named after one of the sons of Abraham by Keturah (Gen. 25: 1-4), by whose descendants it was inhabited. They were a wandering people inhabiting the Sinaitic peninsula, reaching from the wilderness of Sinai on one side to the territory of Moab on the other, **Begat two sons**—Gershom and Eliezer. (Exod. 3: 22; 4: 25, 26; 18: 2-4.)

30. **Forty years** having passed, according to the current tradition of the Jews. (See on ver. 23.) **In the wilderness, or desert, of mount Sinai.** He "came unto the mountain of God unto Horeb." (Exod. 3: 1.) In the Old Testament both names are used of the same locality; in the New Testament only Sinai occurs. Horeb appears to designate the whole mountain range; Sinai, the particular mountain from which God gave the law. **An angel of the Lord.** The highest critical authorities omit *of the Lord*. In Exod. 3: 2, it is "the angel of Jehovah," a manifestation of God himself, especially of the second person, the *Logos*. He is also called "the angel of his presence" (Isa. 63: 9), "the angel of the covenant" (Mal. 3: 1), and he speaks as God himself (ver. 31; Exod. 3: 6). Compare Exod. 13: 21 with 14: 19. In his great brevity Stephen simply says *an angel*, but since he appropriates the titles of God (ver. 32), he must be no less than "the Son of God," since God will not give his glory to another." (Isa. 42: 8; 48: 11.) **In a flame of fire, or fiery flame**, symbol of the divine presence. It was not natural fire, for it did not consume the bush, but the supernatural light of God's glory. (Exod. 19: 18; Isa. 6: 4; Ezek. 1: 4; Rev. 1: 14.) **In of a bush—a thorn or bramble bush**, out of the midst of it. The whole phrase is equivalent to *a flaming burning bush*.

31 flame of fire in a bush. When Moses saw *it*, he wondered at the sight; and as he drew near to behold *it*, the voice of the Lord came unto him, saying, ^k“I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” Then Moses trembled, and durst
32 behold. ^mThen said the Lord to him, Put off thy shoes from thy feet: for the place where thou standest is holy

34 ground. I have seen, I have seen the affliction of my people which is in Egypt, and I have heard their groaning, and ⁿam come down to deliver them. And now come, I will send thee into Egypt.
35 This Moses whom they refused, saying, ‘Who made thee a ruler and a judge?’ the same did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer ^oby the hand of the angel which appeared to him in the bush.

^k Matt. 22 : 32 ; Heb. 11 : 16.

^l Judg. 6 : 22 ; 13 : 22 ; Isa. 6 : 5.

^m Josh. 5 : 15.

ⁿ Isa.

63 : 8. ^o Exod. 14 : 19 ; Num. 20 : 16.

31. To behold. Moses drew near to observe more closely the sight, what it could be. **The voice of the Lord**—of Jehovah. (Exod. 3 : 3, 4.) From this and the declaration in the next verse it is evident that it was the angel of Jehovah, the divine Son, the Revealer under both the Old and the New Dispensations.

32. Some of the oldest manuscripts omit **God** before **Isaac** and **Jacob**, making the form the same as in 3 : 13. Christ deduces the doctrine of a future life from these words (Matt. 21 : 32), indicating that the patriarchs were still living, one day to be reunited with their bodies. **Then Moses trembled and durst not behold**, observe, contemplate it, which he was proposing to do. (Ver. 31.) Hence the Improved Bible Union Version translates, *Dared not consider it*. “And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God.” (Exod. 3 : 6.)

33. In the account in Exodus this verse is brought in before the preceding one. In his hasty survey Stephen simply adds this command also. Not **Then**, but **And the Lord said unto him: Put off, etc.** *Loose the sandals from off thy feet*—a mark of reverence in the East in the presence of a superior. The priests officiated barefoot in the tabernacle and the temple. Mohammedans always enter their mosques with naked feet. Founded probably on the idea of putting off all impurity, to which the feet are peculiarly exposed in walking. (Josh. 5 : 15.) **Is holy ground**—because of the presence of Jehovah. This was five hundred years before the temple was built, and the fact shows that God was not confined to place in the manifestation of his presence. Thus Stephen grad-

ually and incidentally brings to view the great doctrine of spiritual worship.

34. In this verse Stephen completes his account of God's call and commission of Moses. It is a partial quotation of Exod. 3 : 7-10. **I have seen**, etc.—literally, *Seeing I saw*, an emphatic expression, *surely I saw*, so also *I heard*. . . . *I came down*. God is presented, after the manner of men, as having come down from heaven to attend to the matter. From his throne he saw *the oppression* of his people, and heard their *groanings* and *sighing* for relief, and he came down to see as it were for himself, his presence being manifested in the burning bush, and his purpose was **to deliver** his people from their oppressors, and lead them to the land of promise. Four hundred years had passed, and the time of fulfillment of God's word was at hand. He commissions Moses and sends him into Egypt.

35. With this verse Stephen begins an application with reference to Moses, as a type and predictor of the Messiah. Two parallels become more apparent: that between Moses and Jesus, with a careful withholding of the name of the latter; and that between disobedient Israel of Moses' day and of Stephen's day. **This Moses**. The demonstrative pronoun *this* is very emphatically used four times at the beginning of this and the next three verses. **Whom they refused**—*rejected*; the one man's act representing the spirit of the nation. He who was *rejected* as a ruler and judge is *commissioned* by God as a ruler and **a deliverer**—*a redeemer*. The last word is carefully chosen, suggestive of Jesus as the *ransomer*. This noun is only found here; but the verb, *to redeem*, from which it is derived, is found in Luke 24 : 21 ; Titus 2 : 14 ; 1

36 He brought them out, after that he had shewed wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, and in the Red Sea,[†] and in the wilderness forty years. This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, 'A Prophet shall the Lord your

God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear.' * This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers: † who received the lively oracles

^p Exod. 33 : 1.

^q Exod. ch. 7 to ch. 14.

^r Exod. 16 : 1, 35; Neh. 9 : 12.

^s Exod. ch. 19.

^t Gal. 3 : 19; Heb. 2 : 2.

^u Deut. 5 : 27, 31.

^v Rom. 3 : 2; 9 : 4.

Peter 1 : 18, and its allied noun *redemption* in Luke 1 : 68; 2 : 38; Heb. 9 : 12. **By, with, the hand of the angel**—with the guidance and helping power of the incarnated angel, the Son, who appeared to him in the bush. Moses became a rescuer of a nation from a nation, and through the giving of the law, with its types, shadows, and precepts, he brought to them a personal salvation (ver. 25) through him, of whom he himself and his teachings were a type and a prophecy.

36. He brought them out—rather, *This same one did bring them out*. Thus he executed the commission which he had received of God. **After that he had shewed**—better, *having wrought wonders and signs* (2 : 22) both before and after going forth out of Egypt. Dr. Hackett notes "that the participle here expresses an accompanying act, . . . since the leading forth formed a general epoch with which the associated events, whether historically prior or subsequent, could be viewed as coincident in point of time." The language was suggestive to Stephen's hearers, that there had been lately one who had done many mighty works among them, by whose power also the apostles, and he himself, had wrought miracles. (6 : 8.) **The Red Sea**—the Indian Ocean with its two gulfs, the Persian and the Arabian. In the New Testament (only here and in Heb. 11 : 29) it is applied to the Arabian gulf lying east of Egypt and Nubia, about fourteen hundred miles long and two hundred miles wide at its widest point. Through its northern extremity the Israelites passed. (Exod. 14 : 21, 22.) **The forty years** of these wonders and leadership would also suggest the disobedience and hardness of heart of the children of Israel.

37. This was that Moses—who was not only a type, but also a predictor of the Messiah. **A prophet shall**

the Lord your God raise up. (See on 3 : 22; Deut. 18 : 15.) Stephen and his hearers were agreed in referring this prophecy to the Messiah, and they knew that he and the disciples held that it was fulfilled in Jesus. Stephen leaves much unsaid, here and all through his speech, making silent applications to be drawn by his hearers from the facts presented and his manner of putting them. They could not accuse him of blaspheming Moses since he revered Moses and followed him whom Moses foretold; but they themselves in rejecting Jesus were dishonoring Moses. (John 5 : 46, 47.) **Him shall ye hear**—the omission of this by the highest critical authorities is in harmony with Stephen's brevity, which could easily be supplied by his hearers. And perhaps the very omission of this clause was suggestive to them that they were not the hearers, but the rejectors of him who, like Moses, was a prophet, lawgiver, mediator, and founder of a new order of things.

38. This is he who was signally favored of God by intimate intercourse and association, the receiver and giver of the law. The high position and dignity of Moses is presented in this verse in contrast with the disobedience of the people in the next verse. **In the church, in the congregation, in the wilderness**—not a church in the New Testament sense, but the *congregation* of the Israelites gathered for a sacred purpose, here referring especially to the gathering of the people before Mount Sinai when they received the law. (Exod. 19 : 17.) See Heb. 2 : 12, and the Septuagint, Deut. 31 : 30; Josh. 8 : 35; Judg. 21 : 8; 1 Chron. 29 : 1, where *ecclesia* is found. (See on 5 : 11.)

With the angel of the covenant (ver. 30) on the one hand, and **with our fathers** on the other hand, between which parties Moses acted as mediator, receiving and giving God's communi-

39 to give unto us. ^rTo whom our fathers would not obey, but thrust him from them, ^sand in their hearts turn back 40 again into Egypt, saying unto Aaron, 'Make us gods to go before us: for *as* for this Moses, which brought us out of the

land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.' ^aAnd they made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifice unto the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their 42 own hands. Then ^bGod turned, and gave them up to worship ^cthe host of

^r Neh. 9 : 16; Ps. 106 : 16. ^s Exod. 14 : 11, 12. 1 : 28. ^c Deut. 17 : 3;

^a Exod. 32 : 2-8. ^b Ps. 81 : 11, 12; Rom. 2 Kings 17 : 16; 21 : 3.

ocations to them. (Num. 12 : 7, 8; Deut. 34 : 10; Gal. 3 : 19.) And this would suggest that Stephen had uttered no blasphemy against God or Moses by holding up Jesus Christ as the mediator between God and men; for it accorded with the divine arrangement in the past, and with Moses as the type of the Messiah. **The living oracles**—not dead words, but *the living utterances*, the divine words, possessing a divine force and efficacy. (Heb. 4 : 12. See Deut. 32 : 46, 47; John 6 : 51; 1 Peter 1 : 3, 23.) The law is holy, just and good and given for life (Rom. 7 : 12-14), and the reason why we do not have life thereby arises from the corruption of human nature. (Luke 10 : 28.)

39. The treatment of Moses here contrasted with the high honor conferred on him by God. **To whom our fathers would not obey, *be* obedient.** They were not willing to obey him and submit to his guidance; but **thrust him from them** (ver. 27), as the unjust Israelites had done forty years before. Stephen seems to take special pains to show that a disobedient and rebellious spirit against God was no new thing in Israel. As the mediation of Moses had been contemptuously refused in a quarrel, so the people rejected his mediation between them and God. **Turned back again into Egypt** does not refer to any attempt to retrace their steps, but rather in **their hearts** abandoned God, longing for the mode of life and the idolatrous worship of Egypt. (Exod. 32 : 1, 4; Neh. 9 : 18.) They grew weary of the demands, restraints, and tests of the worship of Jehovah, and longed for the license permitted by idolatry. (Exod. 16 : 3; 17 : 3; Num. 11 : 4.) Their wish to return to Egypt was not till later. (Num. 14 : 4.)

40. This verse shows how the Israelites returned back into Egypt in their hearts: By saying unto Aaron **make us gods**, etc. Yet Aaron made but

one calf. This is best explained by regarding it as an example of the Hebrew plural of excellence for the singular, applied to God. The phrase *make us gods* is a literal translation of Exod. 32 : 1. (See Exod. 32 : 8.) This is confirmed by Neh. 9 : 18. Yea, when they had made a molten calf, and said: "This is thy God that brought thee up out of Egypt." They wished an image representing the Lord **to go before** them, as Jehovah had gone before them in a pillar of cloud. (Exod. 13 : 21.) **For** introduces the reason: **This Moses** (spoken contemptuously), our leader, has disappeared, and we need another representing God to guide us. **We wot—we know—not what is become of him**—showing their unbelief and loss of confidence in Moses and God.

41. **And they made** the image of a calf, or *bullock*; one full grown, but not put into the yoke, in imitation of the bull Apis, worshiped at Memphis, or the bull Mnevis, worshiped at Heliopolis, in Lower Egypt. Mummies of the sacred bulls are still found in the catacombs. The Israelites were tenacious of this symbol of idolatry. Jeroboam set up a golden calf both at Bethel and Dan. (1 Kings 12 : 28; 2 Kings 10 : 29.) In all these cases Jehovah seems to have been represented, but under a forbidden form. (Exod. 20 : 4, 5; 32 : 4.) **Rejoiced**—made merry, as part of their idolatrous service. (Exod. 32 : 6; 1 Cor. 10 : 7.) **In the works of their own hands**—of the calf and what might appertain to it, as the result of their joint labors. (Exod. 32 : 6.) All religious self-glorification and rejoicing is of the nature of idolatry.

42. **And God turned**—withdrew his favor, and in retribution **gave them up** from time to time until the days of Amos and afterward. (Josh. 24 : 10; Isa. 63 : 10; Rom. 1 : 28; Acts 14 : 16.) **To worship the host of heaven.** The

heaven; as it is written in the book of the Prophets, 'O ye house of Israel, have ye offered me slain beasts and sacrifices by the space of forty years in the wilderness? Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of

Moloch, and the star of your god, Remphan, figures which ye made to worship them: and I will carry you away beyond Babylon.

sun, moon, and stars are so called on account of their number and order. This form of idolatry is called Sabæism from the Hebrew word meaning *host*; and was common in Chaldaea and Phœnicia, as well as in Egypt. (Deut. 4: 19; 2 Kings 17: 16; Isa. 34: 4; 2 Chron. 33: 3, 5.) To sustain his assertion Stephen appeals to Amos 5: 25-27, quoted mostly from the Septuagint Version. **In the book of the Prophets**—the twelve minor prophets, of which Amos was one, reckoned by the Jews as a single volume. **Have ye offered to me**, etc. The question in the original requires a negative answer, *Did ye offer*, etc. Ye cannot maintain that ye offered to me slain beasts and sacrifices forty years in the wilderness. Professing to serve God, they approached him with wrong motives and a wrong spirit, and so vitiated their offerings by idolatry as to render their offerings unacceptable to God. (Lev. 17: 7; Deut. 32: 17; Lev. 10: 1; Num. 16: 1 f.) "This accusation of Amos was no contradiction of the story of the Pentateuch, which indeed speaks of the ordinary daily sacrifices during the desert wanderings, but what conated in God's eyes the formal rites and sacrifices performed by priests under the immediate influence of Moses, compared to the spontaneous offerings made, and to the service done to the golden calves, and to the host of heaven?" (DR. J. S. HOWSON.)

43. Yea, rather And, ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch. The most natural meaning is that they carried in procession this tabernacle similar to that consecrated to Jehovah. But we cannot suppose that Moses would have allowed idolatrous processions in the wilderness. Others suppose a reference to small shrines similar to those of the Ephesian Diana (19: 24), which the people secretly carried about with them and worshiped. Yet it may be asked, Would God, who punished the sin of Achan, have passed over such a secret idolatry among his people? Besides, there is no mention

of anything of the kind in the Pentateuch. It would seem that the prophet refers to the idolatries which from age to age had been developed from that begun in the wilderness by the worship of the golden calf and other associated and closely consequent false worship. (Deut. 32: 17.) And this view seems to receive confirmation from the last clause of this verse, for we can hardly suppose that the sin in the wilderness was the cause of the captivity eight hundred years later, though in connection with other sins in succeeding ages God might remember that. (Exod. 32: 31.) *Moloch* was the name of the idol-god of the Ammonites. Its image was a hollow brazen figure, with the head of an ox and out-stretched human arms. It was heated from within and little ones were placed on its arms to be slowly burned, while the priests beat drums to prevent the parents from hearing the dying cries of their children. Hence the image was called *Tophet* from *tophin*, drums. (Jer. 7: 31.) Its worship was forbidden by Moses (Lev. 19: 21; 20: 2), but afterward practiced. (1 Kings 11: 7; Jer. 32: 35.) **The star of your god**—the star image, the image resembling a star of the god **Remphan**, or *Rephan*, the Coptic name for Saturn, who was worshiped by the Arabians, Phœnicians, and Egyptians. The child sacrifices which were offered at Carthage to Saturn, as described by Diodorus Siculus, were similar to those offered to Moloch. **Figures or images which ye made to worship.** Thus far this verse follows the Septuagint Version of Amos 5: 26. The Hebrew varies somewhat and has different readings. See margin of the Revised Version. The Septuagint may represent an ancient and essentially true text. A tablet lately discovered in Egypt represents a group of gods, two bearing the names of Remppu and Keu. The Hebrew in Amos has the name Chiun, and the Septuagint Raephan; therefore Stephen, for unknown reasons, substitutes the name Remppu or Remphan,

44 Our fathers had ^dthe tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as he had appointed, speaking ^eunto Moses, ^fthat he

should make it according to the fashion 45 that he had seen. ^fWhich also our fathers that came after brought in with

^d Exod. 38 : 21.

^e Exod. 26 : 30; Heb. 8 : 5.

^f Josh. 3 : 11-17; 4 : 10, 11.

But Dr. Hackett has well said, "It was unnecessary for Stephen to correct the current version; for he adduced the passage merely to establish the charge of idolatry, not to decide what particular idol was worshiped." Both the Hebrew and the Septuagint end the verse with *beyond Damascus*. Stephen naturally substitutes the actual place of exile, **beyond Babylon**. It was a Rabbinical custom thus to modify and extend according to historical facts and actual fulfillment. (MEYER.) Besides *beyond* the remoter place was also *beyond* the nearer; beyond Babylon was beyond Damascus.

Thus in regard to Moses, Stephen shows that so far from blaspheming him and the law, he held him in the highest honor as a lawgiver, type, and predictor of Christ.

44-53. The tabernacle, the temple, and the prophets. The tabernacle was not confined to any place, was temporary and typical of a heavenly and spiritual worship. The temple was of like nature, and was not intended to limit the presence of God. The prophets had been persecuted by their fathers, whose spirit his hearers manifested in slaying the Righteous One, resisting the truth and disobeying the law.

44. Stephen begins a new section in his historical argument, that of the tabernacle and temple, in connection with which there were changes and modifications of worship. As he had been accused of blaspheming the temple, he wisely shows his high reverence for the sacred places as appointed by God, and at the same time corrects any false conceptions of them which the Jews might entertain. **Our fathers had**, etc. Literally, *the tabernacle of witness, or tent of testimony was to our fathers in the wilderness*. It was for them especially suggestive of its temporary nature; for the instruction of the nation, especially suited to their migratory condition; and this the people carried over into the promised land. It was more commonly called *the tent*

of meeting (Num. 16 : 18), because it was the place of meeting between Israel or their representative and Jehovah. It was also called the *tent of testimony* (Exod. 38 : 12; Num. 1 : 50; 17 : 18), because it contained the ark of testimony, in which were the two tables of the law, (Exod. 25 : 16.) It was a movable structure forty-five feet long, fifteen feet wide and fifteen feet high. It was divided by a curtain into two rooms, the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies. In the first was the table of shew-bread, the golden candlestick, and the altar of incense; in the second was the ark of the covenant with the mercy-seat above the ark, and the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy-seat. (Exod. 26 : 33.)

As he appointed—*as he who spoke to Moses commanded*, on Mount Sinai. (Exod. 24 : 12-18.) **That he should make it according to the fashion, the pattern, he had seen.** (Exod. 25 : 40; Heb. 8 : 5.)

This would give peculiar sanctity to the tabernacle, the image of the heavenly pattern; but Solomon's temple, the second temple, and Herod's temple were patterned after the tabernacle. At the same time this would suggest the transitory nature and subordinate value of the tabernacle and temple worship, which must in due time give way to the spiritual worship under the New Covenant of the Messiah. See this thought developed in the eighth and ninth chapters of the epistles to the Hebrews.

45. This verse is difficult to translate so as to bring out the main idea, that the tabernacle which was brought in with Joshua continued unto the days of David. With David the epoch of the temple worship began to dawn. The following rendering brings out the leading thought: *Which tabernacle our fathers received in succession unto the days of David, having brought it in with Joshua into the territory possessed by the heathen, whom God drove out before our fathers*. Some have thought that Stephen by the words, **unto the days of David**, indicates the gradual

* Jesus into the possession of the Gentiles ;
 b whom God drove out before the face of
 our fathers, unto the days of David ;
 46 c who found favour before God, and d de-

sired to find a tabernacle for the God of
 Jacob.
 47 e But Solomon built him an house.

g Jos. 3 : 6, 7, Joshua ; Heb. 4 : 8.

h Neh. 9 : 24 ; Ps. 44 : 2.

i ch. 13 : 22 ; 1 Sam. 15 : 28 ;

16 : 1. k 2 Sam. 7 : 1-13 ; 1 Kings 8 : 17 ; 1 Chron. 22 : 7.

l 1 Kings ch. 5 ; ch. 6.

expulsion of the Canaanites until the reign of David. "But this, although historically true, would not have been expressed by the aorist (drove out), which denotes an act performed once for all. Nor is it relevant to Stephen's purpose to relate how the Canaanites were driven out, but rather to describe the condition of the sanctuary during that long interval. From Joshua to David, God abode among his people in a movable tent, which was often shifted from place to place, and handed down from one generation to another." (ALEXANDER.) Similar, Meyer, and Hackett, who adds that "it exalts the subordinate clause (whom God drove out before our fathers) above the principal one." **Jesus**, the Greek name of the Hebrew *Joshua*. So also in Heb. 4 : 8. The tabernacle passed over Jordan with Joshua and was set up by him at Shiloh, about twenty miles north of Jerusalem (Josh. 18 : 1), where it remained during the Judges. Afterward it was removed to Gibeon, about five miles northwest of Jerusalem (1 Chron. 21 : 29) ; but David prepared a new tent, probably similar to that of Moses, near his own residence on Mount Zion, for the reception of the ark. (2 Sam. 6 : 17 ; 1 Chron. 16 : 1.) It appears from 1 Chron. 6 : 31-48 ; 16 : 4-6, 37-42, that David arranged a service of worship in connection with this tabernacle, so as not to interfere with the duties of the priests and the sacrifices at the altar. Asaph and other Levites were appointed over this service, which consisted chiefly of prayer and praise.

46. The dawn of the temple period begins with the words **Who found favor before God**. It was this *favor* with God that gave David confidence to ask permission to build him a house. It was a further favor and condescension on God's part to grant the request (2 Sam. 7 : 5-11.) Israel, since the days of Moses, had been constantly going astray. The tabernacle had failed to

unite and concentrate the worship of God. If there could be only a permanent central place and a splendid temple, David may have thought, then the worship of Jehovah would become established and universal throughout Israel. The granting of the temple was thus a concession and an adaptation to human weakness. **And desired—and asked for himself** as a favor. The prayer is not given, but it is implied in 2 Sam. 7 : 2 ; 1 Kings 8 : 17 ; 1 Chron. 22 : 7. The spirit and frame of mind begetting such a request are beautifully indicated in Ps. 132. **To find**, etc. To express David's request, Stephen uses the language of Ps. 132 : 5 from the Septuagint. Notice the repetition of the verb *find*. First David found favor with God ; then he asked that he might "*find* a place for Jehovah, dwellings for the Mighty One of Jacob." (Ps. 132 : 5, Hebrew.) There may be some allusion, as Alexander remarks, to the discovery of the place where the temple was to be built, which was made known by revelation to David. (1 Chron. 21 : 22, 26 ; 22 : 1.) **A tabernacle**. The Greek word is not the same as that rendered tabernacle in the preceding verses. It means *a habitation*, referring to the temple as the habitation of God. Instead of the movable tabernacle David asked for a more permanent dwelling place for Jehovah. **For the God of Jacob**—as the God of his chosen people. Herein "lies the holy national motive for the request of David." (MEYER.)

47. But—though David asked for himself the privilege, it was denied him, and **Solomon built him a house**, that is, a temple. David instead had the greater promise, that he should have a house and kingdom forever, pointing to the Messiah who should descend from him. (2 Sam. 7 : 11, 16.) David also holds a higher place than Solomon in the Scriptures : yet the former all his days worshiped with

43 Howbeit **the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands**; as saith the
49 prophet, *"Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye*

build me? saith the Lord, or what is the place of my rest? Hath not my hand made all these things?"

in ch. 17 : 24 ; 2 Chron. 6 : 18. in Matt. 5 : 34, 35.

the tabernacle, the latter builds a temple. Thus the inferior to David, and also to Moses the builder of the tabernacle, builds a temple. It was not necessary to the piety of David, nor essential to acceptable worship. By implication also Stephen answers the charge of blasphemy. If he had said of the temple, that it would not endure forever, was it blasphemy, when David, the man after God's own heart, did not build it, but worshiped in the tabernacle, as well as Moses, Joshua, and Samuel, and the people of God for hundreds of years? And if the tabernacle designed upon the model (ver. 44) received from God himself, of which the temple was a copy, did not endure forever, was it blasphemy to speak of the temple as preparatory and transitory in its nature? Thus while Stephen treats the temple with reverence as the house of God, he at the same time indicates that whatever he had taught regarding its transitory nature, or even said of its destruction, was in harmony with its sacred history.

48. Spiritual worship, not confined to time or place, which had been implied throughout the speech, Stephen now brings more clearly into view, by summarizing Solomon's own language at the dedication of the temple (1 Kings 8 : 27): **Howbeit the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands.** The best manuscripts omit *temples*, and read *dwelleth not in that made by the hand*, that is, by the skill of man. What a contrast between *the Most High* whom he had styled "the God of glory" (ver. 2) and *hand-made* dwellings, such as houses and temples! Surely Solomon did not think that God could be confined to one place: "But will God indeed dwell with men on the earth? Behold, heaven, and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house which I have built." (2 Chron. 6 : 18.) Stephen would guard against a superstitious reverence of the temple and against robbing God of the glory of his

omnipresence. And to further confirm and bring out the great principle of spiritual worship he quotes from their great evangelical prophet, Isaiah. "His eye was already sweeping across the long interval to the advent of Jesus, and the quotation from the prophet Isaiah would tend to give more emphasis to his main thought than one from Solomon would have done." (DR. SCHIAFF, in *International Revision Commentary*.)

49. The quotation is from Isa. 66 : 1, 2, deviating but slightly from the Septuagint. It is from the last chapter, the winding up, of his prophecies, that Isaiah foretells the coming of the new spiritual economy, when Jehovah will no longer dwell in material temples, but in human hearts. The prophecy was peculiarly appropriate to Stephen's purpose, pointing to the great spiritual truth underlying all dispensations, and to the changes which were then going on in the superseding of the Old Dispensation by the New. **Heaven is my throne.** The meaning is: I pervade all space; heaven and earth are filled with my all-ruling presence: *What manner of house then will ye build me, or what is the place of my rest*—my permanent place or exclusive abode? (Compare Paul at Athens, 17 : 24.)

50. Continuing the quotation from the last verse, but substituting an interrogation for an affirmation in the original prophecy. The meaning is the same, since the question requires an affirmative answer. **Hath not my hand made all these things?** Is not the universe the dwelling place and the temple of its great Architect, and may I not be worshiped anywhere within its bounds by the true and humble supplicants? Stephen does not complete the quotation, but the passage was doubtless familiar to Stephen's hearers and would suggest its conclusion: "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word."

51 Ye ^ostiffnecked and ^puncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Spirit: as your fathers *did*, so do ye.

52 ^qWhich of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? And they have slain them which showed before of the coming of

^o Exod. 32 : 9; Isa. 48 : 4. ^p Lev. 26 : 41; Ezek. 44 : 9; Rom. 2 : 28, 29. ^q 2 Chron. 36 : 16; Jer. 2 : 30; Matt. 23 : 31-36; Luke 13 : 31-35; 1 Thess. 2 : 15.

Thus is brought into view the nobler temple of the renewed and contrite heart. (Isa. 57 : 15; Ps. 34 : 18; 138 : 6; 2 Cor. 6 : 16.)

51. One line of Stephen's argument was really now complete. He had shown that the Mosaic law was only a part of a progressive revelation, which began before there was any temple, tabernacle, or rite of circumcision; that all these were preparatory and types and shadows of a better covenant; and that according to their own prophetic Scriptures the temple was only a type of that grander temple of God's universal worship, wide as the world and lofty as the heaven. The argument skillfully arranged must have burst with overwhelming force upon the minds of his hearers. He suddenly changes his manner of utterance. Perhaps he saw the disturbed, confounded, and angry looks of his judges, indicating hardness and stubbornness of heart, with impatience on the one hand and a determination to condemn on the other. He saw there was no further need of historic argument, no readiness to listen to reasoning. To show that the Messianic prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus, and to hold him up as a Saviour, were worse than useless, casting as it were pearls before swine. He turns at once to the other line of thought, which he had been bringing to view in his historic argument, that the Jews had always been unfaithful to God, and he applied it to his hearers in a burst of righteous denunciation. They are not the words of anger, but those of holy rebuke, uttered under the power of the Spirit, the stern application of truth to the hearts and conscience. See the words of John the Baptist (Luke 3 : 7-9) and of Jesus in the twenty-third chapter of Matthew.

Ye stiffnecked—stubborn, headstrong, obstinate. (Exod. 32 : 9; 33 : 3, 5.) **Uncircumcised in heart and ears**—with souls and senses closed to di-

vine admonitions. (Jer. 6 : 10; 9 : 26; Lev. 26 : 41.) *Ye are heathenish*, a terrible indictment to a Jew. They were like the stubborn ox that refuses to receive the yoke (Neh. 9 : 6), and their hearts and ears were like those of the heathen without spiritual renewal, and not open to the influences of the Divine Spirit. (Deut. 10 : 16.) **Ye do always**—in the past and up to the present time—**resist the Holy Spirit**—resisting and opposing the ministers of God who spoke under the guidance of the Spirit. **As your fathers did, so do ye.** In resisting the prophets who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. (Isa. 63 : 10.) That this is the meaning is very evident from the following verse.

52. Stephen indicates the facts in support of what he had charged against them and their fathers. **Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?** This is descriptive of their general spirit and conduct. The question does not require that all were persecuted, yet most of them in fact suffered ill usage. (1 Kings 19 : 10; 2 Chron. 36 : 16.) Notice that it is now not *our* but *your fathers*. The guilt of their fathers was deepened in that they had slain the prophets who foretold the coming of the **Just, or Righteous, One**—Jesus Christ being absolutely just, without sin (3 : 14; 1 Peter 2 : 22); and who would "justify many." (Isa. 53 : 11.) In Rabbinical literature the Messiah is designated "The Just One." The climax was their own guilt, in that they were the **betrayers and murderers**, two of the blackest crimes which they could commit against a fellow man, but even these they had committed against the Messiah. (James 5 : 6; Matt. 23 : 29-36.) **Ye and now** are emphatic and in contrast to their fathers of ancient times. They were the *betrayers* through Judas whom they employed, and the *murderers* by condemning Jesus and delivering him to

* the Just One of whom ye have now been the betrayers and murderers: † who have

received the law by the disposition of angels, ‡ and have not kept it.

† ch. 3 : 14 ; 22 : 14.

* Gal. 3 : 19 ; Heb. 2 : 2.

‡ John 7 : 19.

Pilate for death, and demanding his crucifixion. (Matt. 26 : 14, 15 ; 27 : 1, 2, 24-26.)

53. Who have received the law by the disposition of angels—*ye who received the law as ordinances of angels*; influenced by their authority to receive it and under obligation to accept that which was enjoined by angelic agency. See Gal. 3 : 19, where Paul speaks of the law as “*ordained* through angels,” the verb being used from which the noun *ordinances* is derived; and Heb. 2 : 2, “The word spoken through angels.” It is not expressly stated in the Old Testament that angels were employed in giving the law (Exod. 19 : 17-19), but it may be fairly implied. In Dent. 33 : 2, it is said (Revised Version) “He came from the ten thousands of his holy ones,” from amidst countless angels who attend him; “at his right hand was a fiery law unto them.” For the latter clause the Septuagint has, “On his right hand were angels with him.” So also Ps. 68 : 17, “The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands upon thousands: the Lord is among them as in Sinai, in his sanctuary.” The Jews held that angels acted as ambassadors or interpreters between God and Moses. Philo and Josephus both bring out this belief. “For we ourselves have learned what is most beautiful and holy in our doctrines and laws from God through the medium of angels.” (*Antiq.* xv. 5 : 3.) On the one hand the angelic connection with the giving of the law ennobled it in the eye of the Jew, but on the other hand it also indicated its inferiority to the gospel. (Heb. 2 : 2-4.) The plural *ordinances* is used with reference to the single acts composing the law. The intervention of angels at the giving of the law is clearly revealed, but the exact part they did is not so certain. Meyer regards them as the arrangers of the divine acts, like arrangers of a festival, in the promulgation of the law. Olshausen regards them as the powers mediating between God and man. Doddridge infers from Heb. 2 : 2 and Gal. 3 : 19, “that God made use of angels as

instruments of forming the voice heard from Mount Sinai.” Alexander regards them “as messengers or heralds through whom the divine communications passed as a military word of command does from rank to rank, or from officer to officer until it reaches the whole corps or army.” One of the Bible Union translators says, “To me it would seem, as if the tables were handed down through ranks of angels, as to persons standing on the rounds of a ladder, one below another in a line reaching from the threshold of heaven down to Moses.” Amid so many opinions, in all of which there may be some truth, it will be safe to say with the careful and cautious Hackett, that the angels were not the authors, but the medium through whom God communicated the law. **And have not kept it**—but violated its commands, and rejected the Messiah. The fact that the law was given by God through the grandeur of angelic agency to Moses, enhances the guilt of the people whose disobedience found its climax in the murder of the Messiah. See the same argument expanded by Paul in Rom. 2 : 17-23. Thus Stephen turns the tables completely upon his judges. So far from blaspheming Moses and God, the temple and the law, he is proclaiming the great truths of God, underlying all his dispensations, and in so doing he gives glory to God, and all proper honor to all his institutions and servants; but they by the transgression of the law dishonored God, and in betraying and murdering the Messiah were even worse than blasphemers. The speech ends suddenly, but pointedly, with eloquence and power. Further concerning the speech and the relation of Stephen to Paul, see end of the chapter.

54-60. THE DEATH OF STEPHEN.

A wonderful contrast is here presented between the infuriated hearers turning into a murderous mob, and Stephen, calm, full of faith and the Spirit with a vision of heavenly glory, holding no resentment, praying, and dying as one who falls asleep!

54 ^u When they heard these things they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed
55 on him with *their* teeth. But he, ^x being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up steadfastly into heaven, ^y and saw the glory of

God, and Jesus standing on the right hand
56 of God, and said, Behold, ^z I see the heavens opened, and the ^a Son of man standing
57 on the right hand of God. Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped

^u ch. 5 : 33.

^x ch. 6 : 5.

^y Isa. 6 : 1-3.

^z Ezek. 1 : 1 ; Matt. 3 : 16

^a Dan. 7 : 13.

54. When, rather, *And hearing these things*, the terrible rebukes of ver. 51-53. The present tense harmonizes with the abrupt termination of the speech. **They were cut to the heart**—their hearts were deeply penetrated and convulsed with rage. See on 5 : 33, where the same verb is used. **Gnashed on him with their teeth**—as if ready to devour him alive: an expression used in the Old Testament to signify furious rage. (Job 16 : 9 ; Ps. 35 : 16 ; 37 : 12.) There was probably an audible outburst of irrepressible anger, which found full vent soon after. (Ver. 57.)

55. But he—in contrast—**being full of the Holy Spirit**, as had been manifest in his very countenance before the beginning of his speech. (6 : 15.) With no concern about himself or his judges, he **looked up steadfastly—intently—into heaven**. (See on 6 : 15.) His thoughts are on heaven and the Lord Jesus. The vision may have been a mental one, but the more natural implication is that the Sanhedrin was convened in some room where the heavens were visible, perhaps in one of the open courts of the temple, or possibly the courtyard of the high priest's palace. Compare Matt. 26 : 3, 58 ; on which see Author's note. **Saw the glory of God**—that unapproachable light, in which he dwelleth. (1 Tim. 6 : 16.) And see on ver. 2. He began his address with "the God of glory," and now he sees the Son of man partaking of that glory. **Jesus standing**—not *sitting*—the posture in which he is on other occasions presented. (Matt. 26 : 24 ; Eph. 1 : 20 ; Col. 3 : 1 ; Ps. 110 : 1.) He has risen from his throne in sympathy, interest, and approval, ready to receive his faithful servant. **On the right hand of God**—the place of honor and co-equal power. (See on 2 : 33, 34.) Very likely Stephen was one of the one hundred and twenty, or one of the five hundred who had

seen the risen Lord, and he now instantly recognizes him.

56. Behold—calling attention to something unexpected and surprising. **I see the heavens**—the plural indicating he saw into the third heaven (2 Cor. 12 : 2), the immediate presence of God. **Opened**—by dividing asunder, such being the literal meaning of the verb. **The Son of man**—the title which Jesus frequently applied to himself, but which our Lord's disciples do not elsewhere apply to him. It is the designation of the Messiah according to Dan. 7 : 13. See Author's note on Matt. 8 : 20. Stephen thus styles *Jesus* of the last verse, because he saw his glorified humanity, and probably also to remind many of those present that his prediction to Caiaphas had begun to be fulfilled ; "Henceforth ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of heaven." (Matt. 26 : 64.) The appearance of the glorified human Christ would also fill his soul with joy and courage, as he beheld that nature in which he suffered clothed in glory. Thus Stephen stands before the same tribunal at which Jesus stood, and charged with the same crime, of blasphemy ; and there gets a view of his victorious Lord. These concluding words of Stephen, like those of our Lord (Matt. 26 : 66, 69) gave color to the charge of blasphemy, and exasperated his hearers to the utmost.

57. Then they cried out with a loud voice. Probably beginning with the Sanhedrin, and extending to all the others present (6 : 9, 12) ; some crying out one thing and some another ; some doubtless shouting, blasphemy ; others, telling him to be silent ; and still others, "stone him, stone him ; he is worthy of death." (See 19 : 32 ; John 19 : 6, 15.) **Stopped their ears** with their hands, indicating their utter abhorrence, and that they might not hear his supposed blasphemies. **Ran upon**

their cars, and ran upon him with one
58 accord, and ^bcast him out of the city and

stoned him: and ^cthe witnesses laid
down their clothes at a young man's feet,

^b Lev. 24 : 14; 1 Kings 21 : 13; Luke 4 : 29. ^c ch. 22 : 20; Deut. 17 : 7.

him with one accord—*rushed upon him* in a body. Their judicial proceedings were turned into a mob. It does not appear that there was any formal vote or any judicial sentence. Yet by their actions the Sanhedrin condemned him to death. "The tumultuous excitement here described may seem incredible in a grave national assembly, and especially in one of a religious character. But it is perfectly in keeping with the treatment of Paul and of our Lord himself, before the same tribunal. (23 : 2; John 18 : 22.) It also agrees with what we know, from other sources, of the growing fanaticism of the zealots, which precipitated, if it did not cause, the final downfall of Jerusalem, and with it the destruction of the Hebrew state." (ALEXANDER.)

58. And cast him out of the city—so that the city, regarded as holy, might not be defiled with blood. Thus the blasphemer in the wilderness was stoned without the camp. (Lev. 24 : 14.) So also Naboth was stoned outside the city of Samaria. (1 Kings 21 : 13.) See 14 : 19, where the Jews did not have the same sacred regard for the heathen city, Iconium. **Stoned him**—the severest Jewish punishment. Blasphemers, idolaters, and flagrant moral transgressors were thus executed. (Exod. 19 : 13; Deut. 17 : 5; Josh. 7 : 25.) The question arises, How could Stephen have been stoned, when it was not lawful for the Jews to put any man to death? (John 18 : 31.) According to the Talmud the Romans took away the power of life and death from the Sanhedrin forty years before the destruction of the temple, probably in the last year of our Lord's life. The act is best explained as an illegal tumultuous outbreak, such as the Roman governor, desirous of the favor of the Jews, sometimes connived at, provided the Roman interest suffered no detriment. During the last years of his procuratorship, Pilate wished the favor of the Jews with the emperor, and they in turn may have taken unusual liberties. The place of Stephen's death is uncertain. Tradi-

tion puts it at "The place of stoning," a little outside of the Damascus gate, near Jeremiah's Grotto, on the road leading north. "The site of Jeremiah's Grotto is peculiarly fitted for a place of execution in consequence of its commanding position. From the summit the eye roams above the city walls over the greater part of Jerusalem, while on the west the ground rises beyond the intervening valley like a theatre. There is hardly another spot near Jerusalem so fitted to be the central point for any public spectacle." (CAPTAIN CONDOR, *Twenty-One Years in the Holy Land*, p. 188.) **The witnesses**—those who had borne false witness (6 : 13), who were to begin the execution. (Deut. 17 : 7.) There were to be at least two witnesses, and the Rabbinical writers say that the first stone was to be cast by one of them upon the breast, and if this failed to cause death, the bystanders were to complete the execution. **Laid down their clothes**—*their loose outer garments*, so as to have the free use of their arms. The stones first cast are said to have been large. **At a young man's feet whose name was Saul**. Saul of Tarsus appears for the first time in sacred history. The act implies, not only that the garments were deposited for safe-keeping, but also that Saul was a zealous opposer of Jesus, and a leader in the persecution of Stephen. (9 : 1; 22 : 20.) Tarsus was the capital of Cilicia, and Saul was doubtless a member of the Cilician Synagogue (6 : 9), and had disputed with Stephen. The expression *young man* is quite indefinite. Philo makes it embrace from twenty-one to twenty-eight years of age. Varro says a man is young at forty-five and aged at sixty. Dio Cassius calls Caesar a young man when he was forty. The "young man" Absalom must have been over thirty when he was killed. Saul was probably thirty or more, since the Sanhedrin shortly after employed him as a chief agent on an important mission to Damascus, which they could hardly have entrusted to a mere youth.

59 whose name was ^dSaul. And they stoned Stephen calling upon *God*, and saying, 60 Lord Jesus, ^ereceive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud

voice, ^fLord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this ^ghe fell asleep. And ^hSaul was consenting unto his death.

^d ch. 9: 1-13; 13: 9.

^e Ps. 31: 5; Luke 23: 46.

^f Matt. 5: 44; Luke 23: 34.

^g John

11: 11.

^h ch. 7: 58.

An ancient tradition put the birth of Saul at Tarsus in A. D. 2, which cannot be very far out of the way. (See Author's *Harmonic Arrangement of the Acts*, § 13, *Notes*.)

Dr. Norris, in his *Key to the Acts* (pp. 145-9), and some before him, have attempted to prove that the *Sanhedrin* had not lost the power of inflicting capital punishment, and that the death of Stephen was an orderly judicial procedure. Their arguments, however, are not decisive, while the Jewish authorities (John 18: 31) distinctly and unqualifiedly state, "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death." To suppose that they merely meant, "It is not lawful at this holy festival to do this," is unnatural and improbable. Besides, according to the Talmud, as quoted by Selden and Lightfoot, this power was taken away forty years before the destruction of the temple by Titus. The passages quoted to prove that they still had this power (John 5: 18; 7: 25, 32, 51; 8: 5, 7, 59; 11: 53; 12: 10; Acts 24: 6; 26: 31) only show that the Roman governors sometimes winked at acts of violence. The speech of Titus (Josephus, *War*, vi. 2: 4) in which he reminds the Jews of the indulgence of the emperors toward them in allowing them to put to death any foreigner, even a Roman, who might pass beyond the partition-wall of the temple, separating Jews from Gentiles, at the most only shows that an exception in an extreme case was made to general rule. But even in this the Roman governor may have given or confirmed the sentence and directed the execution. See note at the beginning of this verse.

59. And they stoned Stephen—both the witnesses and the people generally. The repetition adds vividness to the narrative, and opens the way to the particulars connected with Stephen's death. **Calling upon God and saying**—*invoking and saying*, Lord Jesus. *God* should be omitted, not being in the original. It was upon

Jesus that he called. (John 22: 20.) **Receive my spirit.** Imitating one of the prayers of Jesus on the cross (Luke 23: 46), Stephen shows the same confidence in the Lord Jesus as Jesus showed in the Father. On prayers to Christ, see 1: 24; 9: 14, 21; 22: 16.

60. **With a loud voice**—like our Saviour, and in imitation of his prayer. (Luke 23: 46, 34.) "The last expenditure of his strength of love, the fervor of which discloses itself in the *kneeling*." (MEYER.) Not only an expression of religious feeling, but perhaps of exhausted strength. Having no further concern regarding himself, his thoughts are taken up in compassion for his murderers. **Lord**—this term here and in the preceding verse applied to Christ, is used most frequently in the New Testament as a designation for God, the Supreme Ruler of the universe, or to Jesus Christ, exalted to the Mediatorial throne and Head over all things to the church. (Acts 10: 36; Rom. 14: 8; 1 Cor. 8: 6; Phil. 2: 9-11.) **Lay not, etc.**—

Weigh not out to them this sin, do not reckon to them, or call them to account for, this sin. "No parallel to this prayer of Stephen can be found out of Christian history." (HACKETT.) It was answered in the case of Paul. "If Stephen had not prayed, the church would not have had Paul." (AUGUSTINE.) With the two prayers of Stephen compare Paul's declaration "He is able to keep that which I have committed to him unto that day" (2 Tim. 1: 12), and his prayer, "May it not be laid to their charge." (2 Tim. 4: 16.) *He fell asleep.* A peculiar and beautiful Christian expression for death. What a contrast to the outward circumstances of his death! The righteous of the Old Testament "lay down with their fathers" or "were gathered to their fathers" (Judg. 2: 10; 1 Kings 2: 10, Dr. Conant's translation); but to the Christians of the New Testament death, robbed of its terrors and peaceful, is but as a sleep. (13: 36; John 11: 11; 1 Cor. 7:

39; 11: 30; 15: 6, 51; 2 Peter 3: 4.) *Cemetery* from the word translated *sleep* was first used by Christians of a place where the body sleeps in hope of resurrection. The first sentence of the next chapter concludes the account of Stephen's death. Saul was *consenting with the others to his death*.

STEPHEN AND PAUL. Stephen appears to have made a deep and lifelong impression on Paul, in his discussions (6: 8-10), in his defence, and in his death. He appears as a connecting link between Peter and Paul, having clearer views of the Gospel Dispensation than the former, and within a step of the developed views of the latter. He has been very justly styled the forerunner of the Apostle Paul. This appears: *First*, from the similarity of charges made against them (6: 11, 13, 14; 21: 21; 24: 5-9; 25: 8), indicating similarity of views and teaching. *Second*, from similarity of methods. Both employ the historical argument. Paul's address at Antioch of Pisidia (13: 16-41) seems born of Stephen's speech at Jerusalem. He briefly traces the history of the chosen people from Egypt to David, notices that the law proved unavailing for justification (13: 39), and his closing appeal (13: 40, 41) reminds us of Stephen's final upbraiding words. *Third*, from verbal and logical coincidences. Thus Stephen speaks of the fathers "who received the living oracles" (ver. 38); and Paul (Rom. 3: 2) says, "They were entrusted with the oracles of God." Stephen again (ver. 51), "uncircumcised in heart;" and Paul (Rom. 2: 29), "circumcision is that of the heart." See also the idea concerning circumcision in ver. 8, expanded in Rom. 4: 11 f. Again Stephen says (ver. 53) that the law "was ordained by angels;" Paul (Gal. 3: 19), that it "was ordained through angels." (See ver. 38; Heb. 2: 2; Gal. 4: 14.) Further Stephen as well as Paul exhibits the Christian Dispensation as superior to that of Moses (ver. 52) and that it was to supersede Judaism (ver. 37). See the Epistles to the Romans and the Galatians; compare also the Hebrews. *Fourth*, from their agreement regarding the spirituality and universality of true worship. Here was an important source of Stephen's offending. "The

God of glory" (ver. 2) surely could not be confined to human temples or any one place (17: 24, 25, 29), and for hundreds of years was with the patriarch and their descendants without any earthly dwelling place. The tabernacle and temple were both temporary and were recognized as such by Solomon and the prophets. (Ver. 47-50.) He brings into view the nobler temple of the renewed heart (see note on ver. 50) and thus foreshadowed Paul (1 Cor. 3: 16): "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (See also 2 Cor. 6: 16.) Thus Stephen was the first to meet boldly and comprehensively the great question concerning the relation of the gospel to the law, of the New Dispensation to the Old. He was the first to break the bonds of Judaism; and it was left for Paul to develop the teachings, and carry on the work, which seemed to be overwhelmed in ruin when the stones mangled and crushed the body of Stephen. See also note on ver. 60.

PRACTICAL REMARKS.

1. We are to treat with respect, and honor those in authority though opposed to religion. (Ver. 1, 2; Rom. 13: 7, 8; 1 Peter 2: 17.)
2. God is glorious in himself, in his attributes, providence, and in all his dispensations to men. (Ver. 2; Exod. 15: 11; Ps. 145: 5; Isa. 63: 1; 2 Cor. 3: 7-10.)
3. God's plan is one both in revelation and providence. The entire course of events under the Old Dispensation was preparatory to the coming of Christ and the Gospel Dispensation. (Ver. 2-50; Gal. 3: 23, 24: 4: 4.)
4. Scripture is a mighty weapon in the hands of God's people, and should be ready for use in giving a reason of the hope that is in them. (Ver. 2-50; 17: 2, 11; 18: 24, 25.)
5. Faith in every age has been the taking of God at his word. (Ver. 2-8; Heb. 11: 1, 8-18.)
6. God's promises, though slow, are sure. (Ver. 2-7; 2 Peter 3: 9.)
7. The promises of God are both an encouragement and a test of our faith. (Ver. 6, 7; Rom. 8: 18, 19, 23-25.)
8. In the father of the faithful we see the nature and effects of justifying faith exercised in uncircumcision, and the lack of its

fruits in the patriarchs who sold Joseph into Egypt. (Ver. 4-9; Rom. 4 : 3-12.)

9. The godly have ever been followed by the hatred and envy of the world. (Ver. 9; Matt. 10 : 36.)

10. Because God sees fit to bring good out of evil is no reason why any should "do evil that good may come." (Ver. 9-15; Rom. 3 : 8.)

11. In the humiliation and exaltation of Joseph we see a type of Jesus. (Ver. 9-14; Phil. 2 : 5-16.)

12. Israel in Egypt a type of God's people in this world. (Ver. 15, 16; Rev. 11 : 8; Gal. 4 : 24, 25.)

13. God is faithful to fulfill his word in its time. (Ver. 17; Gal. 4 : 4; Eph. 1 : 10.)

14. God directs his providences so as to secure the accomplishment of his designs. (Ver. 17-21; Hab. 2 : 3.)

15. How soon are benefits received forgotten! (Ver. 18; Gen. 40 : 23.)

16. "God so protects his people that even enemies become their servants." (Ver. 21; 28 : 17-21.)

17. God often makes human learning subservient to his cause, and uses it in his service. (Ver. 22; 22 : 3.)

18. Moses was a striking type of Christ. (Ver. 23-28, 35-37; Heb. 2 : 12.)

19. We see in Moses the power and triumph of faith, in visiting his kindred and making their case his own. (Ver. 23-27; Heb. 11 : 24, 25.)

20. Learn concerning God's dealings with men. For forty years God is preparing Moses to take charge of his chosen people, while they justly continue in bondage, and learn not to spurn God's deliverer. (Ver. 27-30.)

21. In the burning bush which was not consumed, we see an emblem of God's people preserved in this world amid fiery persecutions. (Ver. 30; Dan. 3 : 25-27; Matt. 16 : 18.)

22. The words of God from the bush were evidences, not only of his presence, but also of a future state of existence. (Ver. 32; Matt. 22 : 32.)

23. God is not confined to time or place. He manifested himself in Mesopotamia, in Egypt, and in the wilderness as well as at Jerusalem. (Ver. 33; John 4 : 21.)

24. God exercises a fatherly care over his people. (Ver. 34; Ps. 103 : 13.)

25. God often brings deliverance to his

doubting and rebellious people through unexpected means and instrumentalities. (Ver. 35, 36; Luke 24 : 21.)

26. Miracles will not always convince men of the authority of God's messengers. (Ver. 36; Luke 16 : 31.)

27. Moses and the prophets all pointed toward Christ as superior to themselves. (Ver. 37; John 1 : 17; Rev. 19 : 10.)

28. Happy are they to whom God entrusts his living word. (Ver. 38; John 17 : 14, 17; Rom. 3 : 2.)

29. In the mission of Moses and the treatment he received of Israel, we have a striking illustration of the grace of God and the ingratitude of men. (Ver. 35-41.)

30. How many professed Christians have in their hearts turned back to Egypt, and been guilty of practices as opposite to Christ's commands as the idolatry of the golden calf was to those of Moses. (Ver. 39-41; Rev. 2 : 14, 15.)

31. Jesus Christ, the Revealer of the Father, is the only image of God. (Ver. 41-44; Col. 1 : 15; Heb. 1 : 3.)

32. It is a terrible punishment when God abandons men to themselves. (Ver. 42; Rom. 1 : 28.)

33. In all our services God demands the homage of the heart. (Ver. 42; Ps. 51 : 17; Isa. 66 : 2.)

34. God may long delay punishment, but it will surely come upon the sinner. (Ver. 43; Num. 32 : 23; 2 Peter 2 : 3.)

35. God adapts his revelations to the conditions of men. The tabernacle (or *tent*) was specially suited to Israel in the wilderness. (Ver. 44; John 16 : 12.)

36. The earthly is but the shadow of the heavenly. Material ordinances are the types and patterns of the spiritual. (Ver. 45; Heb. 10 : 1.)

37. God often yields to the desires of his children, and accommodates himself to their infirmities. (Ver. 46, 47; 1 Sam. 8 : 6, 7, 22.)

38. Temples and outward observances have their place, but may be abused and become idols, and hindrances to true worship. (Ver. 47, 48; Mark. 7 : 3-7.)

39. The abandonment of the tabernacle and the destruction of the temple have not affected God's presence with his people. The universe is God's dwelling place, and renewed hearts the temples in which God delights. (Ver. 49-51; John 14 : 23.)

40. "When the heart is uncircumcised, the ears are in the same condition." (Ver. 51; 8: 21.)

41. Resisting the Holy Spirit indicates great depravity of heart. (Ver. 51; Isa. 63: 10.)

42. The Scriptures may be entrusted to us, and yet, giving attention only to the letter, and not discerning the Spirit, we may fail to understand them. (Ver. 52; 2 Cor. 3: 6.)

43. Rejecting one truth leads to the rejection of others. Rejection of the prophets culminated in rejecting the Messiah. (Ver. 52, 53.)

44. The evidences and glory of divine revelation aggravate the guilt of those who reject it. (Ver. 53; Luke 12: 47.)

45. The unrenewed heart hates the truth, and so wicked men often treat spitefully those who desire to save their souls. (Ver. 54; John 4: 19, 20.)

46. A view of Jesus is a foretaste of heaven, and the best preparation for afflictions and death. (Ver. 55; Phil. 1: 23.)

47. The human and divine Christ is the channel of communication between earth and heaven to either the living or dying believer. (Ver. 56; John 1: 51; Rev. 5: 5, 9.)

48. Prejudice and malice blunt the moral sense, distort the mental vision, and lead to the disregarding of all forms of law and to the most atrocious crimes. (Ver. 57, 58; Ps. 10: 4-10.)

49. "They stone one witness, but God is preparing another to take his place." (STARKE.) (Ver. 58.)

50. Jesus is divine. We have an inspired example and warrant to pray to him. (Ver. 59; John 20: 28.)

51. If we commit our all to Jesus in life, we shall be prepared to commit our souls to him in death. (Ver. 59.)

52. To forgive our enemies and to pray for them are evidences of the divine love shed abroad in our hearts. (Ver. 60; Rom. 5: 5; 12: 19-21.)

53. The death of the Christian is but as a sleep, through the hope of a resurrection and a glorified life. (Ver. 60; 1 Cor. 15: 55-57.)

54. Stephen (meaning *crown*) was crowned in life with grace, crowned at death as a martyr, and in heaven crowned with glory. (Ver. 60; Rev. 2: 10.)

Ch. 8: With this chapter begins a new era in the history of the Christian church. Christianity is no longer confined to the mother church of Jerusalem, but it spreads abroad among Jews and proselytes, and churches are formed in Judea, Samaria and Damascus. The account of this extension of the gospel is given in this chapter and the next, covering a period of perhaps four or five years. In the death of Jesus the Jewish nation through their ecclesiastical rulers had rejected him, and now the same authorities, representing especially Jerusalem, reject the Holy Spirit and the gospel. (7: 51.) Because of the presence of the Spirit and the greater light given, the later sin was greater than the former. This may be regarded as ending the Messianic week foretold by Daniel (9: 25-27), in the midst of which the Messiah was cut off. If this week of seven years began with the public ministry of Jesus, which ministry lasted a little over three years, than the apostles had been carrying on the work at Jerusalem three and a half, or nearly four years. According to this theory the death of Stephen occurred the latter part of A. D. 33, or early in A. D. 34. From this time began the emancipation of the disciples from the temple worship, with which they had thus far been outwardly connected. Thereafter we hear no more any special increase of the church at Jerusalem. The gospel is now preached to the Jews outside of the capital city, in Judea and Samaria, for a like period of time, after which it is through Peter extended to the Gentiles. (10: 1.)

1-3. THE BURIAL OF STEPHEN—THE PERSECUTION AND SCATTERING OF THE DISCIPLES. This forms a fitting close of the last chapter. (22: 19, 20.)

1. And Saul was, etc. Closely connected with the last chapter and forming a connecting link between the death of Stephen and the persecution that ensued. **Consenting**—*approving with* those who accomplished the murder of Stephen, implying that he was pleased at Stephen's death. Accordingly, the Improved Bible Union version translates: "And Saul was well pleased with his death." The

Persecution and scattering of the disciples; Philip in Samaria; followed by Peter and John

8 AND at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and ¹they were all scattered

abroad throughout the region of Judæa and Samaria, except the apostles.

2 And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and ^kmade great lamentation over him. As for Saul ¹he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and

¹ ch. 11 : 19-21.

^k Gen. 50 : 10.

¹ ch. 9 : 1-13, 21; 22 : 4; Gal. 1 : 13.

same word is used in Luke 11 : 48, "Ye allow," approve with satisfaction, "the deeds of your fathers." (See 22 : 20.) Thus Saul shared their guilt (Rom. 1 : 32), which Paul doubtless often confessed (22 : 20), and no doubt in the hearing of Luke. Some have supposed that Saul was a member of the Sanhedrin. But the language here rather implies that he was not one of them, but that he was pleased to act in concert with them in thus hastily and summarily killing one whom he regarded as guilty of a most heinous crime. Some infer from 26 : 10 that he soon after became a member of that body.

At that time—on that day of Stephen's death and burial, and as an immediate consequence there arose a **great persecution**. (11:19.) This violent and sudden outbreak spread against the discipleship generally. The Pharisees and the fickle populace now unite with the Sadducees. **Against the church**—or congregation of believers. (See *on*, 5 : 11.) **All were scattered abroad**. *All* used in a popular sense, meaning a general dispersion. Thus we say, "It is known to all," when we mean it is generally known. The Christian assemblages and the arrangement of alms-distributors were broken up, and the body that gathered in daily worship was scattered. Many, doubtless, afterward returned. **Judea and Samaria**—all of Palestine south of Galilee. Why Galilee is omitted is uncertain, as somewhat later churches were there. (9 : 31.) Perhaps that region, where many of the five hundred disciples resided (1 Cor. 15 : 6), did not so much need these evangelists. **Except the apostles**. They doubtless remained under the general influence and direction of the Holy Spirit. As the divinely appointed leaders, they seem to have felt it their duty to stay and watch over the interest of the church at the centre of Jew-

ish Christianity. A divine providence appears to have protected them. "It is not unlikely that the persecution was principally directed against those who sympathized with Stephen, and boldly avowed their belief in a change of the customs of Moses. There is nothing in Peter's speeches to show that he had gone as far as Stephen. He was more conservative; and it may be that he and the other apostles for this cause escaped awhile." (Dr. P. SCHIAFF, in *International Rev. Commentary*.)

2. And—carrying back the mind to the expiring Stephen. (7:60.) **Devout men**—pious Jews, who did not approve of putting Stephen to death, and in this way showed their belief in his innocence. (2:5.) The blind fury of persecution would not have allowed Christians to formally bury him. Notice that they are not called believers (5:14), or disciples. (6:1; 9:1.) Stephen must be buried according to Jewish custom, but the fact stated is that it was done by *devout men*, a phrase never used in the New Testament to describe Christians. Ch. 22 : 12 is no exception, for Paul is describing Ananias to a Jewish audience according to a Jewish standard. **Carried**—jointly bore away, or buried Stephen. They united in giving him a religious burial. **Made great lamentation**—with beating of the breast, as a sign of grief, according to the Jewish custom. **Over him**—over his body, as they stood around his bier. (See Author's Notes on Matt. 9 : 22.)

3. As for Saul—but Saul, in contrast to the devout Jews who mourned over Stephen and gave him rites of burial. He ignored the conservative advice of his teacher, Gamaliel. (5:34.) The persecution at first was doubtless severe and fitful, but Saul enters into it systematically and perseveringly. He **made havoc**—wasted or ravaged the

haling men and women, committed *them* to prison.

4 Therefore *they* that were scattered

abroad went every where preaching the word. Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto

ch. 11 : 19.

church, like a fierce wild beast. This is confirmed by Paul's description of himself. (26 : 9, 10 ; 1 Tim. 1 : 13.) How he devastated the church is told in the rest of the verse. **Entering into every house**—*house after house*. His intense zeal showed itself in not stopping with public places and gatherings, but in searching privately for disciples, and in **haling**—*dragging both men and women*. His violent seizure of *women* indicates his severe cruelty, and is mentioned twice after this. (9 : 2 ; 22 : 4.) **Committed them to prison**—for trial (4 : 3), and sometimes as a punishment. (26 : 10.) Our Lord foretold this form of persecution. (Luke 21 : 12.) Thus he persecuted "beyond measure" (Gal. 1 : 13), put some to death (22 : 4 ; 26 : 10), and used every effort to make Christians blaspheme the holy name of Jesus. (26 : 11.) He appears to have continued this for several months, and his fame as a persecutor spread far and wide, even into foreign cities. Thus Ananias at Damascus had heard of him. (9 : 13, 21 ; Phil. 3 : 6 ; 1 Cor. 15 : 9.) He acted under the authority of the Sanhedrin (9 : 2), and in the meantime may have become a member of that body.

4-25. THE GOSPEL PREACHED IN SAMARIA, BY PHILIP, PETER, AND JOHN. The false conversion of Simon the Sorcerer. (Ps. 78 : 37.)

4. **They therefore**—resuming the thought of ver. 1, and introducing the results of the persecution, the rapid diffusion of the gospel. Thus what appeared to be a terrible calamity is overruled for good in fulfilling our Lord's words, "Ye shall be my witnesses, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria." (1 : 8.) We have here the first exemplification of Tertullian's noted saying: "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church." **Went everywhere**—or *through the towns and villages of Palestine*. As they continued their missionary labors their circuit was greatly extended, going as far as Phœnicia, and Cyprus, and Antioch. (11 : 19.) **Preaching, announce-**

ing, the word as *glad tidings* respecting Christ and his salvation. The disciples generally thus became the proclaimers of the gospel, some more formally than others, but all joyfully and spontaneously. Here it would seem that evangelists among the ministry arose. (21 : 8 ; Eph. 4 : 11.) It is also to be noted that they were not appointed by the apostles, but entered upon their ministry under the direction of God's providence and Spirit.

5. The general statement of the preceding verse is illustrated by a single example, selected not only because it was one of the first remarkable successes of the gospel, but also because it fulfilled our Saviour's words (1 : 8) in extending the truth into a race that held an intermediate place between Jews and Gentiles. **Then, rather, And,** simply continuing the narrative. **Philip**—one of the seven. (6 : 7.) Not the apostle, for he remained at Jerusalem. (Ver. 1.) The persecution would naturally be hottest among the foreign Jews, since it began among them (6 : 8-11), and Saul of Tarsus was their leader. Philip is called "the evangelist" (21 : 8), indicating that he had well earned that title, and his ministry as an evangelist probably now began. There is no evidence that he preached, because he was a deacon. Indeed, the persecution must have interfered with the distribution of goods. And with the scattering of the disciples the alms distributors must have had comparatively little to do. Philip was no longer needed at Jerusalem as a deacon. Under the direction and call of the Spirit, he enters upon the work of an evangelist. (See closing note on preceding verse.) **The city of Samaria.** Many manuscripts read *a city*, etc. Hence some suppose Sychar, or the ancient Shechem, to be meant. (John 4 : 5.) But Westcott and Hort, following the most ancient authorities, read *the city of Samaria*, the royal capital of the kingdom of Israel for two hundred years, founded by Omri, B. C. 925, about thirty-eight miles north of

6 them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For ^aunclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many, that

were possessed *with them*; and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were 8 healed. And there was great joy in that city.

^a ch. 5 : 16 ; Mark 16 : 17.

Jerusalem. It was more than once destroyed, but was restored and rebuilt by Herod the Great, and called Sebaste, in honor of Augustus Cæsar. It was still often called Samaria. In regard to the Samaritan, see 2 Kings 17 : 24-41 ; Ezra 4 : 1-3 ; John 4 : 9. **Preached Christ to them**—was *proclaiming to them the Christ*, that he had come, and that Jesus of Nazareth was he. The Samaritans were expecting the Messiah. (John 4 : 25.) The verb translated *preached*, means to *make proclamation* as a public herald. This appears to have been the first public preaching of the gospel outside of the Jewish nation. Jesus had visited Sychar on his way from Jerusalem to Galilee, and had conversed with the woman at the well and with the inhabitants of the city regarding himself, but there is no record of his preaching publicly there. (John 4 : 27-43.) And when he sent forth his apostles, two by two, he expressly charged them, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into a city of Samaritans enter not." (Matt. 10 : 5.)

It was a bold step of faith in Philip to preach the gospel to the half-heathen Samaritans. It was the first step in overcoming the barriers of prejudice that surrounded the Jewish nation. (John 4 : 9.) "He who eats the bread of a Samaritan," said the Jewish doctor, "is as one who eats swine's flesh." "No Samaritan shall ever be made a proselyte. They have no share in the resurrection of the dead. To be a Samaritan was to have a devil in the eyes of a rigid Jew." (John 8 : 48.) (DR. J. B. LIGHTFOOT, *Comm. on Gal.*, p. 299.) Yet Jesus had prepared the way at Sychar. (John 4 : 5-42.)

6. And the people—the multitude—gave heed. They were *unanimously attentive* to Philip's preaching. (16 : 14 ; Heb. 2 : 1.) **Hearing and seeing**—the occasion of their favorable interest. *When they heard the message which*

was welcome to them, *and saw the signs which he did*, being evidences of the truth he uttered and of his own commission from the Lord. (2 : 22 ; 6 : 5.) The visit of Jesus, a few years before, doubtless contributed to Philip's success. The announcement of the Messiah was pleasing to the Samaritans, and also that God was no respecter of persons. (John 4 : 25-12 ; see ver. 8.) The miracles of Philip also were most important, since Simon Magus had deluded the people with his lying wonders. (Ver. 9-11.)

7. The signs are here given. The demoniacal possessions are expressly distinguished from the natural diseases. **For unclean spirits.** The oldest manuscripts read: *For many of those who had unclean spirits.* Not all of them. **Crying with a loud voice.** Confessing, perhaps, the power of Christ. (See Mark 3 : 11 ; Luke 4 : 41.) On *unclean spirits* and their possession of men, see note on Mark 1 : 23. The three maladies here mentioned were probably the worst of those healed. "It is worthy of note, that Luke in the Acts, in speaking of those possessed, never uses the term demons (*daimonia*), which he himself in the gospel has nevertheless employed oftener than the other Evangelists. From which one may infer that the power of possession was feeblér after Christ's death. (1 John 3 : 8 ; Col. 2 : 15 ; Heb. 2 : 14.)" (BENGEL.) It may also be noted that no possession of an Israelite is recorded in the Acts, but among those only where Christ's power had not come in direct conflict with evil spirits, such as Samaritans and Gentiles. (16 : 16-18 ; 19 : 11-16.)

8. There was great, or much, joy in that city. The great joy arose from the general interest of all the people, from the wonderful cures effected, and from the welcome tidings of pardon and salvation. (See on ver. 6.) It "is to be restricted, neither to the natural enjoyment of recovered health, in one's

9 But there was a certain man, called Simon, which beforetimes in the same city
 * used sorcery, and bewitched the people of

Samaria, giving out that himself was
 10 some great one: to whom they all gave
 heed, from the least to the greatest, say-

* ch. 13 : 6.

own person and in that of others, nor to the intellectual pleasure of acquiring knowledge and discovering truth, nor to the spiritual happiness arising from conversion and assurance of forgiveness, but must be understood as comprehending all these elements, and therefore justly called *great joy*." (ALEXANDER.)

9. With this verse begins an account of the first conflict of Christianity with one of the impostures of the outside world. The logical statement is, that the field was already occupied when Philip entered it. **Simon** was a native of Giton of Samaria, according to Justin Martyr, who was himself a Samaritan. Josephus, who would be less likely to know regarding this, speaks of a Simon Magus, a native of Cyprus, a dependent of Felix and a minister of his vices. Neander regards the two as the same person. The name Simon was, however, a common one. Magicians were not uncommon in the Apostolic age. In 13 : 8 we have an account of another one, Elymas. (19 : 13.) Concerning the earlier and better class of the Magicians, see note on Matt. 2 : 1. Simon is an important character in Ecclesiastical History, but much concerning him is legendary. He is spoken of as the father of the Gnostics, and the founder of a heretical sect called Simonians, "whose tenets were a mixture of Oriental, Jewish, Samaritan, and Grecian religious elements. The germ of their principles may be plainly traced back to this Simon, though we cannot attribute to him the complete system of this sect, as it existed in the second century." (NEANDER, *Planting and Training*, p. 64.) **Used Sorcery**—*practicing magical arts*. His power derived, perhaps, partly from an advanced knowledge of natural philosophy, especially chemistry, and partly from the arts of conjuration and jugglery. **Bewitched**. A strong word in the original, *to throw into wonderment*; they were carried away with astonishment. **The people**

—*the nation of Samaria*, showing how widespread his influence had become throughout the whole province of Samaria. This may imply, as Alexander remarks, that he was an itinerant magician (19 : 13), who reached the city a little before Philip's arrival, although previously known to the inhabitants, as mentioned in ver. 11. **Giving out**—*declaring himself to be, boasting that he was, some great one—some extraordinary person*. The expression is stronger than that in 5 : 36. Perhaps not asserting, but leaving the impression that he was superhuman, that, according to the Oriental philosophy, one of the *eons*, or emanations of Divinity had now appeared in his person. According to Justin Martyr he pretended that he was God. Jerome relates that he said, "I am the Son of God," "the Paraclete," "the Almighty," etc. But these bold assertions, if made by him, were probably uttered after this, when his opposition to Peter and Christianity became fixed and intense.

10. All . . . from the least to the greatest—The people generally, both young and old. The Samaritans were peculiarly susceptible to such deluding influences. "In times of vague and earnest inquiry, various kinds of extravagance are likely to prevail. This was the case with the Samaritans. As at that time in other parts of the East, a similar indefinite longing after a new communication from heaven—an ominous restlessness in the minds of men, such as generally precedes great changes in the history of mankind, was spread abroad; so there were not wanting persons to misdirect and deceive this longing, while they falsely promised it satisfaction." (NEANDER, *Planting and Training*, p. 58.) The estimate of the people concerning Simon is now given: **This man is the great power of God**, or according to the oldest and best manuscripts, *This man is that power of God which is called great*, he is the great one, a

ing, This man is the great power of God.
 11 And to him they had regard, because
 that of long time he had bewitched them
 12 with sorceries. But when they believed
 Philip preaching the things concerning

the kingdom of God, and the name of
 Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both
 13 men and women. Then Simon himself
 believed also: and when he was baptized,
 he continued with Philip, and wondered,

P 2 Thess. 2 : 10.

4 ch. 1 : 3.

† ver. 21 ; Ps. 78 : 36, 37.

kind of emanation from the Invisible God, manifested in his person. And he was doubtless willing to be so accounted. **To whom they gave heed**—the same verb as in ver. 6. "To Philip they gave heed because of his doctrine and his miracles of beneficent healing; to Simon, because of their astonishment at his works of witchcraft. Mere wonder-working is never a sound basis for a religious belief, a truth which the modern spiritists would do well to bear in mind." (ABBOTT.)

11. To him they had regard—rather, *they gave heed*—the same word so rendered in ver. 6 and 10. The reason of this attentive following is given: *Because for a long time he had bewitched, rather, amazed them with his sorceries.* (See on ver. 9.) This was no new thing, for Simon had continued a long or considerable time (for the note of time is quite indefinite), carrying away the people with his enchantments. Whether Simon Magus did perform wonders through Satanic influence, or only imposed on the people, is not definitely settled by the narrative. Witchcraft was practiced in Old Testament times, and at the present day frauds are practiced in the East by Mohammedan astrologers. But whether frauds or only partly so, Satan was at the bottom, who is "the prince of the power of the air," and works "in the children of disobedience." (Eph. 2 : 2.)

12. The Samaritans had been held spellbound under the power of Simon, the sorcerer, but the charm was broken by the power of the gospel. **But when they believed**—the people generally. **Preaching the things,** etc.—rather, *Announcing the good news concerning the kingdom of God*—its history, doctrines, prospects, and requirements. (See 1 : 3.) **And the name of Jesus**—proclaiming him as the Saviour. (Matt. 1 : 21.) **Christ**—the Messiah, the Anointed prophet, priest,

and king. (See on 3 : 16 ; 4 : 10, 12.) Notice Philip preaches not himself, but Jesus Christ; but Simon Magus exhibits himself and his powers. **They were baptized**, professing their belief in what they had heard of Christ and his kingdom and their allegiance to him and their union with him. **Both men and women**—showing that the gospel was prevailing greatly in Samaria, even as it had some time before at Jerusalem. (5 : 14.) It should be noticed that Philip in Samaria began to carry into practice the doctrine which Stephen preached, and to fulfill the prediction of Jesus just before his ascension. (1 : 8.) He was the founder of a semi-Jewish or semi-Gentile church. The Jewish Christians could assent to this, since the Samaritans were circumcised and held to the law of Moses.

13. The miraculous signs wrought by Philip not only overcame the influence of the sorceries of Simon, but also convinced Simon himself of their reality. **He himself believed**—that what Philip preached was true, that Jesus was the Messiah, but he failed to appropriate him, by a personal, saving faith, as his Saviour. His faith was only historical and intellectual, with no change of his inner life, as is shown by his after conduct and Peter's rebuke. (Ver. 17-21.) We need not regard his professed conversion and his baptism as acts of deceit, but as a desire to reform and as a temporary improvement. "He was overcome at the moment by the heavenly power of the truth, and he surrendered himself to it for a time, and to a certain degree. But it was only to a certain degree! He allowed not the light to penetrate into the concealed depths of his heart; there was no thorough humiliation of the man." (OLSHAUSEN.) **He continued**—*he was adhering to Philip.* He was a constant attendant upon Philip, apparently proffering his ser-

beholding the miracles and signs which were done.

14 ^a Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received

the word of God, they sent unto them Peter 15 and John: who, when they were come down, prayed for them ^b that they might 16 receive the Holy Spirit: for ^c as yet he was

^a ch. 11 : 22.

^b ch. 2 : 38; John 20 : 22.

^c ch. 19 : 2.

vices as an assistant. Thus he could watch and study the miracles. The history of Simon Magus refutes the dogma of baptismal regeneration. **Wondered**—the same word rendered “bewitched” in ver. 9, 11. He who had *amazed* others is himself amazed. **Beholding the miracles and signs.** Manuscript authority appears to preponderate for the reading: *signs and great miracles.* (See on 2 : 22.) Simon was astonished; for he had never seen nor done the like. His religion was not that of faith in Christ, or of supreme love to God; but of wonder at a power which he coveted, the reality of which he could not doubt.

14. When the apostles which were at Jerusalem—they were remaining there. (ver. 1.) **Heard that Samaria**—the country of Samaria, represented by its capital city. (ver. 5.) **Received the word of God**—accepted by faith the gospel as a revelation from God. This was probably a surprise to the apostles, since the Samaritans were a mixed (Jewish and Gentile) race, and Jews and Samaritans mutually detested each other. (John 4 : 9 ; 8 : 48 ; Luke 9 : 52, 53.) Jesus, however, had prepared the way in counteracting their prejudices by his personal labors among them (John ch. 4), and by his prediction that the gospel should be preached to them. (1 : 8.) The barriers of religious prejudice gave way when the apostles **sent to them**, the Samaritans. **Peter and John**—closely attached friends, perhaps the more so by their dissimilarity of character. The narrative shows that they acted jointly and equal in authority. (See on 3 : 1.) They go together according as Jesus sent out two by two. (Mark 6 : 7.) Such appears to have been the practice of the early missionaries. Thus Paul and Barnabas (13 : 2), Paul and Silas (15 : 2), and Barnabas and Mark (15 : 37), labored in pairs. John, who would call down fire from heaven

on a Samaritan village because it rejected Jesus (Luke 9 : 54), now goes to the believing Samaritans on a gospel mission. This is the last mention of John in the Acts as connected with active work. He is incidentally named as the brother of James in 12 : 2, and from Gal 2 : 9, it appears that he was at the conference at Jerusalem. (15 : 4) The object of this mission of Peter and John was of a varied and general character. To learn the state of things, aid Philip in his work, supply what might be wanting, extend sympathy and the hand of fellowship to believers in Samaria.

15. Who . . . prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit—and thus he put on a level with the believing Jews, and he openly owned as Christ's followers. It is implied that the Spirit came, in this instance, in answer to the prayer of the apostles. But in the case of Cornelius without either the prayer or the laying on of hands. (10 : 44.)

16. For as yet he—not *it*, as in the Revised Version. The Holy Spirit is a Divine Person, and should be referred to by the masculine pronoun. Jesus, the great teacher, makes this distinction, “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth.” (John 16 : 13-15.) **Had fallen**—implying something sudden and extraordinary. (See 10 : 44 ; 11 : 15 ; 13 : 11 ; 19 : 17 ; Ezek. 11 : 5.) **Upon none of them.** The miraculous gifts of the Spirit had not come upon them. They had believed and received the regenerating influence of the Spirit (John 3 : 5), but they had not received the power from on high. (See 1 : 8.) It is evident from ver. 18 that the gift of the Spirit here meant was attended with outward and visible phenomena, such as speaking with tongues. **Only**, as believers, **they had been baptized in, or into, the name of the Lord Jesus, into a professed union with him and sub-**

fallen upon none of them: only ^athey were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

^a ch. 10: 48; Matt. 28: 19.

17 Then ^γlaid they *their* hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.

^γ ch. 19: 6; 2 Tim. 1: 6.

jection to him without receiving those supernatural gifts of the Spirit, which had been so common in the church at Jerusalem. Compare "upon the name" (2: 38), and "in the name" (10: 48), and also note on Matt. 28: 19. Some object to the rendering "*in* the name" as misleading, and to "*into* the name" as not good English, though the literal form of the Greek; and prefer "*unto* the name," with reference to the name and all the obligations implied, here signifying allegiance and subjection to the Lord Jesus. (See DR. BROADUS, *Commentary*, Matt. 28: 19.) There is no discrepancy between Matthew (28: 19) and Luke (here and 19: 5.) The commission "into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" includes the name of the Lord Jesus, and "into the name of the Lord Jesus" does not exclude the Father and the Holy Spirit from the baptismal formula. The apostolic preaching and profession centered in Jesus. God the Father and the Holy Spirit were accepted by the Jews, so far as they understood. To accept Jesus as Lord and Christ was to acknowledge that he came from the Father, and that he had sent the Holy Spirit into the world. To be baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus was a brief comprehensive expression, hinging upon the central person of the Godhead. It makes no pretension to being a baptismal formula, but only a statement of a fact which implies, not merely allegiance to the Son, but also to the two other persons of the Triune God. The question, "Into what then were ye baptized?" (19: 3) shows Paul's surprise that any could be baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus without hearing of the Holy Spirit, and implies that the name of the Holy Spirit was connected with baptism. (See on 19: 3 f.)

17. Prayer is answered in the gifts of the Spirit. The Spirit who was about to come upon the Samaritan believers doubtless moved Peter and John to lay on hands; and thus he honored

them as Christ's apostles. **Then they laid their hands on them and they received.** The imperfect tense describes the action as continuing and in progress: *they were laying on their hands, and they were receiving.* The prayer appears to have been made once for all, and afterward the imposition of hands upon the converts in succession, taking considerable time. It would also seem from the next verse that Simon was witnessing this manifestation of the Spirit on one after another. The natural inference is that hands were laid upon all who had been baptized. This, however, was not necessarily the case. They were not laid on Simon (next verse), and perhaps not upon some others. The laying on of hands was a common practice in Old Testament times. Jacob laid his hands on Joseph's sons, in connection with his benediction. (Gen. 48: 14-20.) Aaron and his sons laid their hands on certain animals for sacrifice. (Exod. 29: 10, 15, 19.) Moses laid his hands on Joshua, at the command of Jehovah, designating him as an associate with himself (Num. 27: 18-23), and attended by the bestowment of the spirit of wisdom upon him. (Deut. 34: 9.) In the New Testament we have Jesus putting his hands on children and blessing them (Mark 10: 16); the apostles laying their hands on the Seven with prayer, at their election to office (6: 6), on which see note; on the Samaritan converts (this verse); Paul on the twelve at Ephesus, who thereupon receive the miraculous gift of the Spirit (19: 6); Ananias on Saul of Tarsus, who receives his sight and is filled with the Spirit. (9: 17.) Besides these, the church at Antioch set apart Barnabas and Saul for their missionary work with prayer and laying on of hands. (13: 3.) Timothy also received the supernatural gifts of the Spirit when the hands of the eldership (1 Tim. 4: 14), including the apostle Paul (2 Tim. 1: 6), were laid upon him at his ordination to the ministry. From these examples it appears that the bestowment of the miraculous gifts of the Spirit in connection with

18 And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money, 19 saying, Give me also this power, that on

whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Spirit., But Peter said unto him, ^aThy money perish with thee, because ^bthou hast thought that ^cthe gift

^a 2 Kings 5 : 26, 27; Dan. 5 : 17.

^b Matt. 10 : 8; 2 Kings 5 : 16.

^c ch. 10 : 45; 11 : 17.

the laying on of hands was confined to the apostles. The laying on of hands was a symbolical act connected with prayer that God would bestow the gifts of the Spirit. The case of Ananias, in relation to Paul, seems to be exceptional. He was specially commissioned of the Lord to minister to Paul; and it does not certainly appear that the gifts of the Spirit were bestowed through the laying on of the hands of Ananias. (See on 9 : 17.) If this power was confined to the apostles, who had no successors in the church (see on 1 : 22), then with them must have ceased this power of conferring the ability to exercise supernatural gifts.

This passage and 19 : 5, 6, are the chief authorities for the rite of confirmation, as practiced by the Episcopal and Roman Catholic churches, in receiving persons into full membership of the church. But in neither of these cases does it appear that hands were laid upon them for the purpose of receiving them into church membership, but for the bestowment of supernatural gifts of the Spirit. They entered the church by baptism. (Ver. 12, 38, 39; 2 : 42.) Other passages cited, such as Heb. 6 : 2; 2 Cor. 1 : 21; Eph. 1 : 13, 14; 2 Tim. 2 : 19, afford no Scriptural ground for the rite of confirmation, nor proof that Christ or his apostles instituted it. It was fitting that miracles should attend the first promulgation of the gospel, and that miraculous gifts of the Spirit should attend the first coming of the Holy Spirit among the Jews, the Samaritans, and the Gentiles. (10 : 44.) It was fitting also that the apostles, the introducers of Christianity, and the organizers and inspired teachers of the church, should be accredited by the miracles of the Holy Spirit.

18. When Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands, etc. From this it is evident that the outward and sensible effects of the Holy Spirit were mani-

festes, such as speaking with tongues; and that this attended and followed the laying on of hands by the apostles. It is also implied that hands had not yet been laid on Simon. *And Simon seeing this power conferred on others, selfishly desired to receive the same gift himself. Had the Spirit come upon him, he could not so soon have made the offer of money. "His impatient desire waits not even for his own experience . . . and before it came to his turn to receive the imposition of hands, he makes his proposal, perhaps even as a condition of allowing the hands to be laid upon him." (MEYER.) Offered them money—brought money to them, as if to bribe them, or to purchase the power. Simon thus ranks this apostolic power with that of the magicians, who were accustomed to sell the knowledge of their arts. From this man and this act the name *simony* has been given to the crime of buying or selling ecclesiastical offices or benefits in the church.*

19. The completion of the sentence begun in the last verse. **Give me also**—as well as yourselves. He was ambitious to be on a level with the apostles. He saw that the possession of such power would be of great worldly advantage to him in increasing his influence and amassing wealth. The offer, the thought, and the purpose showed that he was a stranger to the inner power and renewing of the Holy Spirit. **Holy Spirit** is without the article. Simon very probably had no conception of him as a personal agent, and very little idea of his spiritual power and influence, beyond the name which he had heard.

20. Thus far in the narrative the two apostles appear strictly associated; but now Peter steps forth in his personal, positive, and impulsive character, and as the spokesman of the two. **Thy money perish with thee**—*thy silver be with thee unto destruction!* An outburst of holy indignation and horror, at the thought and proposal of

of God may be purchased with money.
21 *Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this*

thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the

* Ezek. 14 : 3. ^d Hab. 2 : 4; Matt. 6 : 22-24.
8 : 34; 2 Peter 2 : 19.

* 2 Tim. 2 : 25, 26. ^f Prov. 5 : 22; John

making religion the means of worldly gain. This is not a curse nor a deliberate wish, for Peter exhorts him to repentance in ver. 22. **Because thou didst think to obtain, or acquire, the gift of God with money.** The sin consisted in the thought and purpose of bribing God, and obtaining with money the divine gift. The thought and the attempt were insulting to the Spirit of God. To Peter gold and silver, like all things earthly, were corruptible and perishable. (1 Peter 1 : 17, 18.)

21. Peter plainly declares to Simon his spiritually lost condition, which was not only evident from his conduct, but also doubtless known to Peter through the Holy Spirit. **Neither part nor lot**—two words almost equivalent, the first used literally, the second figuratively, making a very strong and emphatic expression. *Thou hast neither share nor allotted portion in this matter*, this thing spoken of, literally, *this word*. This has been variously referred, to the gift of the Spirit, to the power or authority to communicate the Spirit, or to the gospel word which had been preached. The latter seems to accord better with the usage of the word and with the description which follows of Simon's utterly graceless state. He had no share in the gospel word (ver. 11) of present and eternal salvation, and hence no interest in the ordinary or extraordinary benefits of the Spirit. Simon was entirely separated in character, interest, and destiny from all that the word of the gospel proffered to men. (See 2 Sam. 20 : 1; Deut. 10 : 9.) **For**—introducing the reason, with such a heart thou canst have no portion of gospel blessings and influence. **Not right**—literally, *not straight*, not upright, but crooked and perverse. **In the sight of, or before, God**, who looketh upon the heart. (4 : 19.) His perversity must have been evident to Peter or to any spiritually minded person, from his base proposal. How much more then to God?

22. **Repent therefore**—your case is not entirely hopeless; your only hope of salvation is in immediate repentance and entreaty of the Lord Jesus Christ. (See on 2 : 38.)

Of this thy wickedness, rather, *from*, etc. See "repentance from dead works." (Heb. 6 : 1.) He must not only confess and sorrow for sin, but forsake and turn from it. *This wickedness*, a general expression including the act and purpose with the underlying depravity (next verse). **And pray God**—according to the highest critical authorities, *the Lord*, that is, Jesus Christ. **If perhaps**. The case was doubtful, so aggravated was his sin. The words were fitted to give Simon hope, and at the same time to arouse him and awaken a sense of guilt. Peter may have thought of the sin against the Holy Spirit. (Matt. 12 : 31.) **The thought—the purpose, project of thine heart** in planning self-aggrandizement by imparting the Holy Spirit. Notice how Peter all along dwells upon the thought, purpose, and state of the heart. **May be forgiven thee**. The matter of forgiveness belonged to God. "This verse is important, taken in connection with John 20 : 23, 'Whosoever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven them,' etc., as showing how completely the apostles themselves referred the forgiveness of sins to, and left it in the sovereign power of God, and not to any power of absolution delegated to them." (ALFORD.)

23. **For** introduces the reason why he should repent. This verse shows that he needed, not only to repent of a single sin, but of the whole course and habit of heart and life. It implies that he had never exercised repentance. **I perceive**. (See on ver. 21.) **In**, literally, *into the gall of bitterness*, or bitter gall. The poison of the serpent was supposed to be in the gall (Job 20 : 14; Rom. 3 : 13), which figuratively denotes the malignity of sin; and the expression *bitter gall*, hostile, malignant deprav-

24 bond of iniquity. Then answered Simon, and said, **stray ye** to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me.

25 And they, when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord, returned to

Jerusalem, and preached the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans.

Philip instructs and baptizes a devout Ethiopian: his subsequent labors.

26 AND the angel of the Lord spake unto

§ Gen. 20 : 7, 17; Num. 21 : 7; 1 Kings 13 : 6; Job 42 : 8.

ity. **Bond of iniquity**—bound in the fetters of wickedness, showing that he was confirmed in the habits of sin. Peter did not doubt the grace of the gospel, or the power of God to forgive, but he saw that Simon's condition was most desperate, both in heart and life. His subsequent life seems to have verified Peter's fears.

24. Simon appears to have been overawed by the stern rebuke of Peter, and alarmed at impending punishment. **Pray ye.** *Ye* is emphatic. Instead of praying himself, as Peter had exhorted, he asks the apostles to pray for him, thus showing a want of a sense of guilt and penitence. A sense of sin would have led him to cry for mercy. (2 : 37; 9 : 5, 11; Luke 18 : 13.) So Pharaoh asked Moses to pray for him (Exod. 8 : 26; 9 : 28; 10 : 17), and afterward hardened his heart. See King Saul, 1 Sam. 15 : 30. Simon also shows a superstitious dependence on their prayers, as if these could prevail without turning himself with penitence, confession, and faith to the Lord. The end which he sought indicates his impenitent heart: **that none of those things**—referring to the destruction and all its terrible result implied in ver. 20, 23, **which ye have spoken come upon me.** Thus there is no seeking for forgiveness of sin, or salvation from sin. The language is not of contrition, but of fear, and of anxiety to escape punishment. Had this rebuke resulted in repentance and conversion to the faith, Luke would hardly have omitted it. The traditions, though somewhat confused and contradictory, testify against any such good result. This is the last mention of him in the New Testament. He is said afterward to have removed to Rome, where he was worshiped as a god, and had a column dedicated to him. (See on ver. 9.)

25. The apostles having accomplished their mission in the city of

Samaria, on their way back to Jerusalem, preached in many of the smaller towns of Samaria. **They**—Peter and John. Philip was probably left to look after the work. **Had testified and preached**—rather, *having testified and spoken the word of the Lord.* It was not their words, but Christ's, whose ministers they were. (13 : 48; 15 : 35; 1 Cor. 2 : 2-5.) Also frequently styled the word of God, as its author. (4 : 31; 6 : 1); see on ver. 14. **Returned,** etc. —*were returning to Jerusalem and preaching or evangelizing the villages.* They were bringing the good news of salvation to the villages, and it was being accepted by the people. Thus they found the field already white unto harvest. (John 4 : 35.) It was while the two apostles were thus engaged that Philip received his new commission. (Ver 26.)

26-40. CONVERSION AND BAPTISM OF THE ETHIOPIAN EUNUCH. (Isa. 53 : 7, 8.) The false conversion of the last section is followed by a true conversion in this. Philip's special mission and subsequent labors were throughout the border cities of Palestine, where the population was largely Gentile. Thus the gospel was gradually extending beyond the bounds of Judaism. The conversion of a descendant of the race of Ham (Amos 9 : 7.) and of one shut out of the congregation by physical defect (Deut. 23 : 1), was another step toward breaking down entirely the barrier between believing Jews and Gentiles.

26. Philip was still in Samaria, and Peter and John were returning to Jerusalem. (Ver. 25.) **The angel**—rather, *an angel, of the Lord.* How he appeared to Philip we are not told, whether by dream or vision. The more probable and natural meaning is, that he appeared visibly and spake in an audible voice. For other instances of angelic ministering in apostolic days,

Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto ^bGaza; which is desert.

27 And he arose and went. And, behold, ^aa man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the

^b Gen. 10 : 19; Josh. 15 : 47.

^a Ps. 68 : 31; Zeph. 3 : 10.

see 1 : 10; 5 : 19; 10 : 3; 12 : 7; 27 : 23. **Arise, and go.** Nothing is implied regarding his posture, whether sitting or lying down. It is rather a command: Prepare thyself, *make ready and journey toward the south unto the way from Jerusalem unto Gaza*. In obeying this command it is not certain that Philip passed through Jerusalem, since he may have left Jerusalem to the left. Gaza, nearly sixty miles southwest of Jerusalem and nearly a hundred miles from the city of Samaria, was one of the oldest (Gen. 10 : 19) and the southernmost city of Palestine, on the route between Syria and Egypt. It was the chief city of the Philistines, although formally assigned to Judah (Josh. 15 : 47), and the scene of one of Samson's exhibitions of strength. (Judg. 16 : 3.) At one time it seems to have been under the power of Egypt. (Jer. 47 : 1.) Alexander the Great captured it after a siege of five months. It was afterward destroyed by the Jewish king, Alexander Jannæus, B. C. 96; but it was rebuilt by the Roman General Gabinus, and in due time was attached to the province of Syria. It was again laid in ruins by the Jews, about, A. D. 65; but it recovered again in the reigns of Titus and Adrian, and Constantine restored it to its ancient splendor. It still exists under the name of Ghuzzeh, and contains about fifteen thousand inhabitants. **Which is desert**—the name is desert, referring to the way, through a desolate and thinly inhabited country. Some refer desert to the city Gaza after it was destroyed about A. D. 65, a date later than the probable writing of the Acts. Others refer it to the site of the old city destroyed by Alexander Jannæus, affirming that the new city stood on a changed site. But all attempts to refer it to the city have been quite unsatisfactory. Some refer the words to the angel, and others, as Hackett, regard it as a parenthetical remark by Luke. But in either case it should be regarded as descriptive of the road and region

through which it passed. There were and are still several roads from Jerusalem to Gaza, and some portion in each route might be styled desert, or solitary and thinly peopled. One by the way of Bethlehem and Hebron, passes through the southern part of Judea, called "the desert" in Luke 1 : 80. The desert way gave opportunity for reading the Scriptures, meditation, and conversation, and baptism. Compare Christ's conversation with Nicodemus alone by night and with the woman alone at Jacob's well.

27. He arose and went—the same words as in the command. (Ver. 26.) His obedience was exact and immediate. He gets ready and journeys without knowing why, or for what. While traveling on foot, the second or third day, **behold**, unexpectedly, he sees in that lonely way, a person of more than ordinary importance, **a man of Ethiopia**, an Ethiopian. The name Ethiopia was applied to the country south of Egypt, which is now called Nubia and Abyssinia. Its inhabitants were large in stature and black in color. **A eunuch**. The Greek means, literally, a *bed keeper*, and was applied to a class of persons in Oriental countries, who, by a cruel and unnatural mutilation, were unfitted to marry and were employed as keepers of Oriental harems, and were appointed to high offices in Eastern courts. (Dan. 1 : 3.) The word is here used in this strict sense of the term, and not in its secondary and official sense, as denoting a high officer of State. "The very fact that he was an officer of the first rank in the court of a queen, makes it most probable that he was actually a eunuch." (MEYER. So also HACKETT.) **Of great authority**—an officer of State, who, in this case, acted as *chief treasurer*, having charge of all her treasure. Alford suggests a lesson from this account as showing that the restriction in Deut. 23 : 1, forbidding such persons from entering the congregation of the Lord, was henceforth done away, as were the

Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and ^k had come to Jerusalem 28 for to worship, was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet.

29 Then ^l the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. 30 And Philip ran thither to *him*, and heard him read the prophet Esaias; and said,

^k Ps. 68 : 29; John 12 : 20. ^l ch. 16 : 6, 7.

barriers against the Samaritans and the Gentiles, and "thus the way paved for the great and as yet incomprehensible truth of Gal. 3 : 28." **Candace**—a name common to the queens of the northern portion of Ethiopia, whose capital was Napata, just as the name Pharaoh was common to Egyptian kings and Cæsar to the Roman emperors. **Had come to Jerusalem for to worship**—showing that he was a believer in the God of Israel, and accepted the Hebrew religion. As the law of Moses did not permit eunuchs in the congregation of the Lord (see above) he would not have been a fully admitted proselyte, but only a proselyte of the gate. (See note on John 12 : 20.) The prophets declared that eunuchs were not excluded from the mercy and grace of God. (Isa. 56 : 5-8; Jer. 38 : 7; 39 : 16-18.)

28. The sentence of the preceding verse is concluded in this. **Was returning**—to his own country by the way of Egypt and thus was on the road to Gaza. He had probably been attending one of the great feasts. As he had come many hundred miles, he would more likely have attended the feast of Pentecost, than the Passover, which was rather early in the year, or the feast of Tabernacles, which would make his return quite late. (See Author's *Harmonic Acts*, note on § 15.) **In his chariot**—suited to his high rank, and doubtless with one or more attendants. (Ver. 38. See on next verse.) **Read**—was reading aloud (ver. 30), as is still customary with the Orientals, though reading to themselves. **The prophet Esaias**—without doubt from the Septuagint, which was well known and mostly used outside of Palestine. He is reading the evangelistic prophet of the Old Testament, and that chapter which gives the clearest revelation of the sufferings of Christ. The Lord who sent Philip on his mission is directing the mind of the eunuch in his search after truth. It is very likely that he

had heard at Jerusalem discussions concerning Jesus and the predictions of the prophets, especially this passage which had uniformly been applied by the Jews to the Messiah, but which now was interpreted differently by those who opposed the claims of Jesus. He is in a receptive state of mind, as the sequel shows, and he appears to have been examining the Messianic prophecies to ascertain the truth in the matter. And he may have taken this desert road in preference to the others for this very purpose.

29. **Then, and, the Spirit said unto Philip.** He inwardly apprehended the voice of the Holy Spirit, who was with him. How this divine impulse came upon him we are not told. It was probably the same in kind as those special impulses enjoyed by all Christian workers, but doubtless greater in degree. (See 10 : 19; 13 : 2; 16 : 6, 7.) Notice that the divine communication is now more direct and of a higher kind than at the first. (Ver. 26.) There is also a progression in the revelation of his work. First an angel sends him into a desert way; then he sees a chariot; now the Spirit commands, **Go near, and join thyself to this chariot**—attach thyself, unite thyself to it. The idea is, form intimate connections, enter into the closest relations with it. This would seem forward and almost preposterous in this humble evangelist on foot. But God had prepared the way, and he obeys, and easily succeeds. **Chariot**—commonly a two-wheel vehicle, used most frequently in war, sometimes, as in this instance, for peaceable purposes. Commonly two persons, sometimes three, one a driver and the other to carry the State umbrella. (1 Kings 2 : 34.)

30. Philip seeing the work committed to him hastens to discharge it. **Ran thither to him**—it was not the chariot, but the eunuch he was seeking, **And heard him read**, etc. Just what

Understandest thou what thou readest?

31 And he said, "How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.

32 The place of the Scripture which he

read was this, 'He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth. 33 In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? For his life is taken from

m Ps. 25 : 9.

Philip wished to talk about, and what the eunuch needed to have explained. **Understandest thou what thou readest?** In the original a question commonly receiving a negative answer, *Dost thou at all know*. As Philip doubtless spoke in Greek the two verbs were almost alike, giving peculiar point to the question—the verb translated *read* being a compound of that translated *know*. Paul uses a similar combination in 2 Cor. 3 : 2, *known and read of all men*. "A strange address to an unknown and great man. In holy conversation we should come at once to the truth itself. Philip did not begin, as is common, with the weather, the news," etc. (BENGEL.) We may learn the value of questions in religious conversation. (See John 4 : 7.)

31. The eunuch's reply indicates earnestness, humility, and a teachable spirit. **How can I, etc.?** *For how could I?*—as the matter stands, with a passage so difficult and mysterious. He candidly and modestly owns his inability to understand it, and his need of instruction. But he sees the possibility of understanding it under suitable guidance. **Should guide me**—shall instruct me. The same word is used by Jesus of blind guides (Luke 6 : 39), and of the guidance of the Holy Spirit. (John 16 : 13.)

And he desired—entreated him; showing that he was eager to learn, and implying that he suspected, perhaps believed, that Philip was the one who could instruct him. **Sit with him**—the travel-worn preacher of the despised Nazareth now sits amid royal honors, and becomes the instructor of a royal minister!

32. **The place, the passage of Scripture which he was reading was this**—from Isa. 53 : 7, 8, and quoted from the Septuagint, with slight variations. It was uttered seven centuries before our Lord's crucifixion, which it so minutely describes, and its meaning was contrary to the prevailing

ideas at that time respecting the Messiah. Its fulfillment in Jesus has ever since been a source of trouble to infidels and Jews. Bolingbroke even affirmed that Jesus brought about his own crucifixion, so as to enable his disciples to appeal to this prophecy in proof of his Messiahship. **He was led as a lamb, etc.** The subject or person here presented is the Messiah. The question which perplexed the eunuch's mind, and which he wished answered, was respecting this person, who he was. (Ver. 34.) The words here were fulfilled in Jesus, yielding himself up to his enemies (Matt. 26 : 52, 53), submitting patiently to indignities (Matt. 26 : 67, 68; 27 : 27-31) and maintaining silence before Pilate and Herod. (Matt. 27 : 12-14; Luke 23 : 9.) His innocence and vicarious suffering are also implied.

33. A difficult and obscure passage, arising in part from the variations of the Greek version from the Hebrew. Amid different interpretations we may well make the answer of the eunuch our own. May the Holy Spirit lead to the right understanding. The Revised Version (American reading) renders Isa. 53 : 8 : "By oppression and judgment he was taken away, and as for his generation who [among them] considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people to whom the stroke [was due]." The true interpretation is doubtless that which fits both the Hebrew and the Greek. **In his humiliation**—in the contempt, violence, and oppression which he suffered, **His judgment**—in that he was innocently condemned and punished, and his rights to justice and humanity were **taken away**. **And who shall describe** the wickedness and blindness of **his generation** in their treatment of him, neither understanding who he was, nor the design of his sufferings. **For his life is taken by a bloody death from the earth.** Had the quo-

34 the earth. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this: of himself or 35 of some other man? Then Philip opened

his month, ^a and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. 36 And as they went on *their* way, they came unto a certain water: and the

^a ch. 17 : 3; Luke 24 : 27.

tation continued the vicarious nature of his death would have been at once brought into view. But the main question which the eunuch wished to know was, Who was the person thus suffering and dying, of whom the prophet spoke? His vicarious sufferings are much spoken of in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, and this Philip would emphasize when he showed that the prophecy was fulfilled in Jesus. While this seems to be the most natural and true view, yet another, thus presented by Meyer, is worthy of consideration: "*In his humiliation his judgment is taken away*"; that is, when he had so humbled himself to the bloody death (see Phil. 2 : 8), the judicial fate imposed by God was taken from him, so that now the culmination and crisis of his destiny set in. (See Phil. 2 : 9.) *But his offspring who shall describe?* that is, how indescribably great is the multitude of those belonging to him, of whom he will now be the family head! (Phil. 2 : 10.) *For*, the ground of the origin of this innumerable progeny, *his life is taken away from the earth*, so that he enters upon his heavenly work relieved from the trammels of earth. . . . According to the above explanation, *his life was taken from the earth*, stands in thoughtful and significant correlation to *his judgment was taken away*. In these correlations lies the righteousness of the Humbled One." (John 16 : 10.)

34. **Then—and, the eunuch answered**—suggested by the question in ver. 30. This verse is closely connected with ver. 31, the quotation from Isaiah being thrown in for the information of the reader. **Of whom speaketh the prophet this, of himself?** Very likely the eunuch heard this question discussed at Jerusalem: Some affirming the common view that it was fulfilled in Jesus, said that Isaiah spoke of himself, who, according to a Jewish tradition, suffered martyrdom,

in the reign of Manasseh, by being sawn asunder. **Or of some other man**—some prophet or righteous man who had been disowned and put to death. Thus the later Jewish writers refer it to Jeremiah or Josiah, or to the suffering which have been inflicted on the Jewish nation. But all such explanations fail to meet the demands of the chapter, and probably would not have been seriously put forth, had they not become necessary as a means of combatting the claims of Jesus. All the early Jewish commentators refer the passage to the Messiah; and this was the common view in our Saviour's day.

35. **Then—and, Philip opened his mouth**—an Oriental expression ordinarily occurring before solemn and weighty words. (10 : 34; Matt. 5 : 2; Job 3 : 1.) **Began**—a somewhat continued and formal discourse, **at**, rather *from this Scripture*, or passage, taking the other passages in connection with it. A better text he could not have selected than that providentially afforded him. **Preached unto him**—*made known to him the good news of Jesus*, whose very name meant Saviour. (Matt. 1 : 21.) The theme, spirit, and method of his discourse are suggested. Doubtless first of all he showed how minutely this passage was fulfilled in the sufferings and death of Jesus, corroborating it by other Scripture, which also foretold his resurrection. He announced him as a Saviour, indicating his person and work, the terms of salvation and his commands, including that of baptism. (Ver. 36.)

36. Philip was all intent in unfolding the gospel and the eunuch was absorbed in hearing the truth, till the attention of the latter was arrested, as they went along the desert way, by **a certain water**. Where this was cannot be decided, since the road which they took is not certainly known. Eusebius and Jerome point to a fountain near Bethzur, now the village

37 eunuch said, See, *here is water*; ° what doth hinder me to be baptized? And

Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he an-

° ch. 10 : 47.

¶ Matt. 28 : 19; Mark 16 : 16.

Bethcoran, not far from Hebron, twenty miles south of Jerusalem. "The water there at present issues from a perennial source, a part of which runs to waste in the neighboring fields, and a part collected into a drinking-trough on one side of the road, and into two small tanks on the other side. It was formerly objected that no chariot could have passed here, on account of the broken nature of the ground, but travelers have now discovered traces of a paved road and the marks of wheels on the stones." (DR. HACKETT.) Dr. Robinson (*Bib. Res.* ii., p. 515) with much assurance places it on the most southern road from Jerusalem, nearer Gaza, below Tell el Hasy. Here he saw the water standing along the adjacent valley, in a country at present "desert," there being now no other similar water on that road. But as Philip received the command from the angel at Samaria (ver. 26), he very likely went directly to another road from Jerusalem to Gaza, without passing through Jerusalem. "If the eunuch came down Wady Aby from Jerusalem, he would follow nearly the same track from Latron that I once took, and this is now regarded as the easiest and safest way." Coming directly from the city of Samaria, Philip "would then have met the chariot somewhere southwest of Latron. There is a fine stream of water, called Murubbah, deep enough even in June to satisfy the utmost wishes of our Baptist friends. This Murubbah is merely a local name for the great Wada Snrar, given on account of copious fountains which supply it with water during summer." (DR. THOMSON. *Land and Book*, Vol. II, p. 310.) **They came**, etc. How unexpectedly and suddenly is vividly brought out: *They came upon a certain water; and the eunuch said, Behold, water.* The journey and the circumstances were arranged by the Lord. **What doth hinder**—He was eager to fulfill the divine requirement at the first opportunity. "*Faith within, and water without, were ready.*" (BENGEL.) **To be baptized.** (See on 2 : 38.)

Very likely the eunuch had heard of John's baptism. But proselyte baptism as a Jewish practice had not yet been introduced. "The most obvious and natural solution is, that Philip's argumentative discourse included and perhaps wound up with an explicit statement of the way in which new converts must profess their faith and be received into the church, and that the eunuch, as the strongest possible expression of assent, proposed to do what he had just been told he must do, and for which the outward means were providentially presented, at the very moment when they could be used." (ALEXANDER.)

37. This verse is not found in the oldest Greek manuscripts, except one, nor in the oldest copies of the Latin Vulgate, the Syriac Vulgate, and the Egyptian versions. The best critics regard it as an interpolation from an ancient baptismal liturgy, or service. If so, it must have occurred very early, since Irenæus (died A. D. 202) quotes it, as also does Cyprian of the third century, indicating the practice of their period,—instruction and examination before baptism. See *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* (vii): "And touching baptism, thus baptize: having declared all these things," that is, the precepts and instructions of the preceding six chapters. "Before baptism let the baptizer and baptized fast, and any others who can; but thou shalt bid the baptized to fast one or two days before." Hackett hesitates about retaining the passage, but says, "Augustine in the fourth century, though he objected to a certain misuse of the text, did not pronounce it spurious." Dr. J. Alexander, who regards the external evidence for and against the passage as very nearly balanced, says: "It may be argued that the verse, though genuine, was afterward omitted as unfriendly to the practice of delaying baptism, which had become common, if not prevalent, before the end of the third century." So also it might have been omitted by some as unfriendly to infant baptism, which began to be practiced about the

swered and said, "I believe that Jesus
38 Christ is the Son of God. And he com-
manded the chariot to stand still: and
they went down both into the water, both
Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized
39 him. And when they were come up out of

the water, * the Spirit of the Lord caught
away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no
more: and he went on his way rejoicing.
40 But Philip was found at Azotus: and
passing through he preached in all the
cities, till he came to Casarea.

* Matt. 16 : 16; John 6 : 69; 9 : 35, 38; 11 : 27; 1 John 4 : 15. * 1 Kings 18 : 12; 2 Kings 2 : 16; Ezek. 3 : 12, 14.

beginning of the third century, and became common among the African churches before its close. The reply of Philip and the confession of the eunuch, as here given, are perfectly natural and in harmony with the teaching and practice of the apostolic church. (Ver. 12, 13; Mark 16 : 16; Acts 2 : 38; 16 : 31-33.)

38. And he—the eunuch. Com-
manded the chariot, etc. Com-
manded the driver that the chariot
should stop. Here is evidence that he
had at least one or more attendants.
Some suppose that he was attended by
a pricey retinue; but of this we have
no evidence. The command of the
eunuch implies that Philip had assented
to his baptism, and that the eunuch
accepted of Jesus as the Christ. **They**
went down both into the water—
not to but into the water; for it
is stated in the next verse that they came
up *out of* the water. (See Mark 1 : 9, 10.)
This was not the baptism, but prepara-
tory to the baptism. It was necessary
for both to go down into the water, in
order that Philip might baptize—that is,
immerse the eunuch. The positive proof
of immersion is in the meaning of the
word *baptize*. The connecting circum-
stances confirm it.

39. The Spirit of the Lord—
the Holy Spirit. Caught away
Philip—taking him suddenly, mar-
velously and swiftly from him. Com-
pare what Obadiah said of Elijah,
1 Kings 18 : 11; and the use of the
word in 23 : 10; 1 Thess. 4 : 17; Rev.
12 : 5; 2 Cor. 12 : 2, 4. This wonder-
ful taking away of Philip would help
to confirm the eunuch's faith. **That**
the eunuch—rather, *And the eunuch*
saw him no more, merely narrating an
additional fact, not implying that be-
cause Philip was miraculously snatched
away therefore the eunuch saw him no
more. The reason is stated in the next
clause: **And—**rather, *for—he went*
on his way homeward. Philip was

hurried from him by a divine impulse,
like one of the old prophets under the
power of the Spirit (1 Kings 18 : 46, or Ezek.
3 : 12-14); while the eunuch recognized
the fact, but was all absorbed in the
revelation of truth and of Christ to his
soul. **Rejoicing—**that he had found
Christ, professed him, and was now
numbered among his followers. "We
do not read of the laying on of hands
on the eunuch." (BENGEL.) Here
the Scriptures leave him. A tradition
says his name was Indich, that he
preached the gospel on his return home
with great success, and that his royal
mistress was among his converts. In
his conversion, and whatever results
there may have been in Ethiopia, we
recognize a fulfillment of Isa. 56 : 3-6;
Ps. 68 : 31.

40. But Philip was found at
Azotus—implying that his going
thither had been extraordinary, and
that it was the next place where he was
seen after leaving the desert. Azotus,
the ancient Ashdod, a city of the Phil-
istines (Josh. 13 : 3; 15 : 47; 1 Sam. 15 : 6, 4), was
near the Mediterranean, about half
way from Gaza to Joppa. It was never
thoroughly subdued by the Jews. It is
only mentioned here in the New Testa-
ment, but a Christian church early ex-
isted there. It is now a small village
called Esdud; and some ruins of a
mound, pottery, and marble indicate
the former city. **And passing**
through, on foot. He preached in
all the cities—he made known the
good news to all the cities between
Azotus and Casarea, such as Ekron,
Lydda, Joppa, and Apollonia, and
largely under Gentile influence. **Casa-**
rea—sometimes called Casarea Pales-
tina, to distinguish it from Casarea
Philippi in the north of Palestine.
(Matt. 16 : 13.) It was about sixty miles
northwest of Jerusalem, on the Medi-
terranean, south of Carmel. It was
built by Herod the Great in honor of

Augustus, adorned with marble palaces, and provided with a magnificent harbor. It was the residence of the Herodian family and of the Roman governors. It was the scene of Peter's visit to Cornelius (10, 11), of Herod Agrippa's death (12: 19-23), and of Paul's imprisonment and trial (21-26). Caesarea became Philip's home, and the centre of his labors, and here, after over twenty years, he entertains Paul and Luke. (21: 8.) It was mostly a Gentile city. A few fishers' huts and ruins now occupy its site.

PRACTICAL REMARKS.

1. The sovereign direction and oversight of Christ is shown both in the calamities and successes of his cause. The centralization, the class and race tendency of the first church was weakened by persecution, and the way opened for the universal promulgation of the gospel. (Ver. 1, 4; Phil. 1: 12; Prov. 11: 24.)

2. The death of good men will call forth our sorrow, and should at the same time arouse us to greater activity and faithfulness. (Ver. 1, 2, 4; 1 Thess. 4: 13; Rom. 13: 12, 13.)

3. A learned-ignorant man, learned in many respects, but ignorant of the grace of God, may sincerely become a very dangerous character. (Ver. 3; 26: 9; 1 Tim. 1: 13; Gal. 1: 3.)

4. To make known the glad tidings of salvation is a common work of all who love Christ. (Ver. 4; Phil. 2: 15, 13.)

5. God calls evangelists to the work of the ministry. When one dies the Lord has another to take his place. (Ver. 5; Rom. 15: 19.)

6. It is not the workers of miracles, but the preaching of the word that results in the conversion of men. Miracles attest, but the word enters the heart. (Ver. 6, 7; 16: 14; Heb. 4: 12.)

7. Miracles were fitting at the first planting of the church in Samaria, at the beginning of Philip's ministry as an evangelist, and in opposing the lying wonders of Simon. (Ver. 7; 6: 8.)

8. The coming of Christ to a human soul, or to a community, brings joy. (Ver. 8; 13: 52; John 4: 42.)

9. Philip preached Christ; Simon pro-

claimed himself. Thus is presented a marked difference between a true Christian and a shrewd worldling, between a true and a false minister. (Ver. 5, 9; 2 Cor. 4: 5; Phil. 1: 15, 16.)

10. Note a contrast also between Simon Magus and Saul of Tarsus. One a man of selfish policy, the other of underlying principles and deep convictions. One becoming an apostate professor, the other a fervent and fearless preacher. (Ver. 1, 10-13; 20: 22-24.)

11. The faithful preaching of the gospel attended with the Holy Spirit will overcome the wiles of the devil and bring men to Christ. (Ver. 12; 19: 18-20.)

12. A mere intellectual faith, without a hearty trust in Christ, is a dead faith; and a baptism without a confession of the heart is a dead baptism. (Ver. 13; Matt. 13: 20, 21; James 2: 18, 19; 1 Peter 3: 21.)

13. The gospel destroys national prejudices and breaks down the partition that separates Jews and Gentiles. (Ver. 14-17; 10: 34; Eph. 2: 14, 15.)

14. The apostles were the first to sanction missionary work. They themselves were missionaries and The Acts is a book of mission sketches. (Ver. 14; 13: 2; 15: 22-29.)

15. The apostles had power over the Spirit only as they prayed for the Spirit. (Ver. 15; 4: 31.)

16. The apostolic office was temporary, like that of Moses and Joshua, having for its object the introduction of Christianity and the full organization of the church. (Ver. 14-17; 2: 42; 5: 2; 6: 2; 9: 32; 11: 1, 18; 15: 6; John 16: 13.)

17. The laying on of hands for the bestowment of the Holy Spirit was apostolic and temporary, and not a rite of confirmation. (Ver. 17, 18.)

18. The gifts and calling of God cannot be bought with money. (Ver. 18-20; 1 Peter 1: 18, 19.)

19. Simon, though a professed Christian, was an unconverted sinner. (Ver. 21, 23; 2 Peter 2: 14, 15.)

20. Repentance, with faith in Christ, is the first step in conversion, the first duty of the sinner. (Ver. 22; 2: 38; 3: 19.)

21. Prayer will not be heard or accepted unless the sinner comes repenting and believing. (Ver. 22; Matt. 3: 4; Isa. 1: 15.)

22. A single sin may indicate a person's

character and show an entire want of true piety. (Ver. 23; Heb. 12: 16, 17.)

23. Sinners sometimes quiet their fears and relieve their consciences by asking the prayers of God's people, while they do not purpose to renounce their sins. (Ver. 24; Exod. 8: 8.)

24. Ministers and all Christians should imitate the apostles and speak of Jesus and the gospel as they travel from place to place. (Ver. 25, 4; 18: 24, 28.)

25. It is not permitted to angels, but to Christian men to preach the gospel to sinners. An angel may direct Philip as to a preaching tour, but Philip must do the preaching. (Ver. 26; 2 Cor. 5: 18.)

26. If the Lord commands, we should not shrink from going to the most barren and unpromising fields; nor think lightly of small congregations. (Ver. 26, 27; 21: 13.)

27. Blessings attend the service and worship of God. In seeking light we get light. (Ver. 27, 28; Matt. 13: 12; Ps. 36: 9.)

28. Reading the Bible is a means of grace and people of all classes and ages should carefully peruse it. (Ver. 28; John 5: 39.)

29. The devout and judicious interpreter may greatly help others to understand the word of God. (Ver. 30, 31; 18: 26; Rom. 10: 14.)

30. A humble and prayerful state of mind and a teachable spirit are essential to the proper study of Scripture. (Ver. 31; Ps. 25: 9.)

31. The Spirit uses two instrumentalities in the conversion of men, the word and the preacher. (Ver. 31; James 1: 18; 1 Cor. 1: 21.)

32. Christ is the fulfiller of the Old Testament, and the sum of the New, the Revealer and substance of the Scriptures. (Ver. 32-35; 2 Cor. 1: 20; Rev. 19: 10; John 1: 1-10.)

33. The word is often an enigma, misused by some, but repaying richly the prayerful study of others. (Ver. 34; 2 Peter 3: 15, 16, 18.)

34. Gospel preaching takes in the sufferings, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ as its centre, and includes the whole circle of Christian faith and practice. (Ver. 35; Rom. 11: 33; Eph. 3: 18, 19; 1 Cor. 2: 2.)

35. One evidence of conversion is a desire and a readiness to obey Christ. (Ver. 35; John 14: 15.)

36. The believing eunuch was a fit subject

for baptism; Simon Magus, wanting in faith from the heart, was an unfit subject. (Ver. 37, 38, 13; Mark 16: 16.)

37. Neither the going down into the water, nor the coming up out of the water, constituted the eunuch's baptism, but were the necessary adjuncts to his immersion. (Ver. 38; Mark 1: 10.)

38. The obedient convert may well rejoice in the Lord. (Ver. 39; Phil. 4: 4.)

39. Ministers should consider themselves under the direction of Christ. When they have accomplished their work in one field the Lord has other places for them to occupy. (Ver. 40; 16: 6-9.)

Ch. 9: This chapter records the continuation of the cruel persecution under Saul of Tarsus; his conversion and baptism at Damascus; his visit at Jerusalem, and his withdrawal to Tarsus. A season 'of peace ensues to the churches, and Peter visits the saints in the district of Judea west of Jerusalem. The narrative presents the diffusion of the gospel among Jews and proselytes, and belongs to the transition period preparatory to offering the gospel to the Gentile world. From about A. D. 34 to A. D. 38.

1-22. SAUL'S CONVERSION AND BAPTISM. PREACHES AT DAMASCUS. (22: 2-16; 26: 4-20; Gal. 1: 13-16; 1 Cor. 15: 8-10; 1 Tim. 1: 12-17.) The structure of the narrative indicates that some time had intervened since the martyrdom of Stephen. (See on ver. 1.) If six months or even a year had elapsed, as seems very probable, the conversion of Saul may be fixed some time in A. D. 35. This accords also with the time when Aretas, king of Arabia, appears to have exercised authority over Damascus. (2 Cor. 11: 32, 33.) See introductory note to ch. 8. (Compare *Harmonic Arrangement of the Acts*, Notes on §16, §17.)

The conversion of Saul was the most important event related in the Acts after Pentecost. Called as an apostle to the Gentiles, his influence has been most directly felt by all nations. The writer of thirteen or fourteen Epistles, as well as the guide of Luke the evangelist and historian, his impress upon Christian theology has been greater than that of any other man. The im-

portance of his conversion is also indicated by the prominence given to it in the Acts, being related three times, once by Luke as the historian, and twice by Paul in defense of himself, but under very different circumstances. He has also given an account of his conversion and Christian experience in his Epistles. A comparison of these four statements illustrates their inde-

pendence and diversity without contradiction, and thus confirms the truthfulness of the narrative. The accounts also supplement one another, and exhibit different sides in the beginning and growth of Paul's religious life. The following table is given for convenient comparison, and extends somewhat beyond his conversion.

LUKE. Chapter 9 : 1-30.	PAUL. Chapter 22 : 2-21.	PAUL. Chapter 26 : 4-23.	PAUL. Epistles.
	His birth and education.		A Hebrew, a Benjaminite and a Pharisee. (Phil. 3: 5, 6; 2 Cor. 11: 22; Gal. 1: 14.)
Fiercely persecutes the disciples.	Persecutes this way unto imprisonment and death.	In sincerity and as a duty persecuted the saints.	A persecutor and blasphemer, in ignorance and unbelief. (1 Tim. 1: 13, 14.)
Asked letters of the high priest to Damascus, to bring men and women to Jerusalem.	Received letters of the high priest and elders to bring those that were bound to Jerusalem to be punished.	Received authority from the chief priests, punishing in the synagogues. Exceedingly mad against the saints; persecuted unto foreign cities.	Persecuted the church of God. (1 Cor. 15: 9.)
Near Damascus a light suddenly flashed about him.	About noon near Damascus a great light suddenly flashed about him.	At mid-day a light above the brightness of the sun shining about him.	
He fell to the earth.	He fell to the ground.	All having fallen to the earth.	
"Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"	"Saul, Saul, why?" etc.	Saying in the Hebrew tongue, "Saul, Saul, why?" etc. "It is hard for thee to kick against the goads"	
"Who art thou, Lord?"	"Who art thou, Lord?"	"Who art thou, Lord?"	"Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?" (1 Cor. 9: 1.)
"I am Jesus whom thou persecutest."	"I am Jesus the Nazarene whom thou persecutest."	"I am Jesus whom thou persecutest."	"Last of all he appeared to me." (1 Cor. 15: 8; Acts 9: 17; 22: 14; 26: 16. Also 9: 27.)
His companions stand speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no one.	His companions saw the light and are afraid, but heard not the voice that spake to him.		

LUKE. Chapter 9 : 1-30.	PAUL. Chapter 22 : 2-21.	PAUL. Chapter 26 : 4-23.	PAUL. Epiſtles.
		Gives him his com- miſſion as a miſ- ſionary and an apostle to the Gen- tiles.	Set apart from birth. called through grace, entrusted with the goſpel of the uncircumci- ſion. (Gal. 1 : 15 ; 2 : 7 ; Eph. 3 : 8.) An apoſtle not of man. (Gal. 1 : 1.)
	"What ſhall I do, Lord?"		
Directed to go into the city for in- ſtruction.	Directed to go into Damascus for in- ſtruction.		
Blinded, he is led into Damascus by the hand.	Blinded by the light, and being led by the hand, he came into Damascus.		
Continues three days faſting	He prays.		Obtained mercy, be- cauſe he did it ignorantly; and that he might be a pattern. (1 Tim. 1 : 13-16.)
Ananias, a certain disciple, ſent to him.	Ananias, a devout man according to the law, and hav- ing a good report from all the Jews, came to him.		
Opens his eyes, and baptizes him.	Opens his eyes, and baptizes him.		
The Lord to Ana- nias: Saul to be a witneſs before Gentiles, etc.	Ananias to Saul: "Thou ſhalt be a witneſs for him to all men."	(See above.)	"The leaſt of all ſaints." (Eph. 3 : 8.) The leaſt of the apoſtles; all of grace. (1 Cor. 15 : 9, 10.)
Saul preached Chriſt at Damascus.		Preached to thoſe in Damascus,	Went into Arabia and returned again to Damas- cus (Gal. 1 : 17.)
Escapes for his life.			Escapes through a window in a baſe- ket. (2 Cor. 11 : 32.)
At Jeruſalem.	Returns to Jeruſa- lem.	in Jeruſalem, and unto all the region of Judea, and to the Gentiles.	From Jeruſalem unto Illyricum preaching the goſ- pel. (Rom. 15 : 19.)
Is ſent by the breth- ren to Taruſus.	In a trance the Lord ſays, "I will ſend thee far hence to the Gentiles."		

Conversion of Saul: preaches at Damascus and at Jerusalem, flees to Tarsus.

9 AND ^a Saul, yet breathing out threaten-

ings and slaughter against the disciples of
2 the Lord, went unto the high priest, and
desired of him letters to Damascus to the

^a ch. 8: 3; Gal. 1: 13; 1 Tim. 1: 13.

It should be noticed that Luke in this chapter writes as a historian. As a physician, it was natural that he should observe symptoms, and so he mentions "the falling, as it were, of scales" from Saul's eyes. In ch. 22, Paul is speaking in his own defense before an angry Jewish mob in the Temple Court. He is therefore very conciliatory, speaking in the Hebrew tongue, presenting the Jewish side of his religious life and experience, and keeping back as long as possible any reference to the Gentiles, which would be offensive to the Jews. In ch. 26 Paul again speaks in his defense, but to a more distinguished and to a less impassioned audience, in the auditorium of the Roman governor at Cesarea. Speaking in the Greek language, he notices that Jesus on the Damascus road spoke to him "in the Hebrew tongue." He dwells more largely upon doctrine and the divine authority of his mission and message. His address is marked by persuasive power and a Gentile coloring. The experience of Paul as gathered from his epistles is such as he would naturally give to his Christian brethren, who could sympathize with him, and understand spiritual truth. He specially displays great humility and magnifies the grace of God. The few apparent discrepancies are easily explained. (See notes on ver. 1, 4, 6, 7, 9.) Compare also notes on the defences in ch. 22 and 26.

1. And—rather, *But*, contrasting with Philip's missionary zeal Saul's persecuting spirit. **Yet** takes the mind back to the brief record of Saul's persecution in 8: 3, and implies that some time had elapsed, probably several months, perhaps a year. The most natural inference from the whole narrative is that the incidents related in the preceding chapter were taking place while Saul was continuing the persecution with increasing intensity, and that his pushing on to Damascus followed the Samaritan revival and the conversion of the eunuch. **Breathing**

out threatenings and slaughter. Omit *out*. *Breathing threatening and murder against the disciples.*

Strong language, representing intense bitterness and activity. He was "exceedingly mad against them," and must have been connected with other martyrdoms than that of Stephen. (26: 10, 11.) Here is a decided advance upon the description in 8: 3. He is now like one panting with rage. He is full of violent hatred against Christians. He has pursued the course so long and so earnestly that a fanatical and destructive fury has become as it were a part of himself. **Of the Lord**—the exalted and glorified Jesus. (1: 24, 5: 31; Phil. 2: 9, 11.) **Went**—of his own accord to the high priest, probably Caiaphas, who continued as acting high priest till the passover of A. D. 36. (See on 4: 6.) It is implied that the high priest, as President of the Sanhedrin, and in its behalf, gave Saul letters of authority. (Ver. 14.) In 22: 5 it is said that he received his commission from "all the estate of the elders," and in 26: 10, "from the chief priests," which are different forms of representing the Sanhedrin. Thus the three statements of the same fact are harmonious. (See 4: 23.)

2. And desired—asked for himself, indicating his forwardness and zeal in instigating persecution at Damascus. **Letters**—official documents, commanding him and clothing him with authority to execute his purpose. Compare Nehemiah receiving letters from the king to the governors of Palestine. (Neh. 2: 7, 8.) The Jews everywhere recognized the Sanhedrin as their highest ecclesiastical tribunal, and it seems to have been accorded as such by the Roman authorities. Julius Cæsar, B. C. 47, decreed that "Hircanus and his children do retain all the rights of high priest, whether established by law or accorded by courtesy; and if hereafter any question arise touching the Jewish polity, I desire that the determination thereof be referred to him." This was

synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.

3 And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: and he fell

† ch. 19 : 9, 23. † ch. 22 : 6-16; 26 : 11-20.

confirmed by Augustus, and thus the Sanhedrin could act through the high priest, their President and representative. Besides, the Roman rulers of Palestine recognized the Sanhedrin as the highest Jewish court, and its ecclesiastical authority appears to have been regarded by Roman governors elsewhere. Regarding **synagogues**, here the ecclesiastical organizations, see on 6:7. In 26:11, Paul says, "I persecuted them unto strange" or "*foreign cities*," from which we may infer that Saul had pursued the disciples into other cities outside of Palestine, before going to Damascus, and probably before receiving letters thither.

Damascus—probably the oldest city in the world; according to Josephus built by Uz, the great grandson of Noah. It is mentioned in the history of Abraham. (Gen. 14:15; 15:2.) It was subdued by David (2 Sam. 8:6), and afterward became the seat of the Syrian kingdom (1 Kings 11:23-25; 15:20), but at length fell into the hands of the Assyrians. (2 Kings 16:9.) The city, however, continued with varying fortunes, and is flourishing to this day, having a population of about one hundred and fifty thousand. It is situated about one hundred and forty miles northeast of Jerusalem in the centre of a large fertile plain, at the eastern base of Anti-Lebanon, where several great caravan routes come together. It is watered by the rivers Barada and Awaj, the ancient Abana and Pharpar. (2 Kings 5:12.) The Jewish population of Damascus was very large, estimated at fifty thousand. Josephus says that ten thousand Jews were massacred there at one time under Nero. It had doubtless many *synagogues*, and Saul's letters to them may have included several documents addressed to the leading ones. The rulers of the synagogues "formed a college whose province it was, among other duties, to punish those who deserted the Jewish faith. (De Wette, *Heb. Archæol.* 244.)" (HACKETT.) **If he found any**—im-

plying that he would find them. **Of this**, literally, *the way*, the well-known faith and manner of life connected with the religion of Jesus. This was a common designation used by Luke. (19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:14, 22.) In 16:17, it is more fully expressed as "the way of salvation," and in 18:25, "the way of the Lord." Thus this designation seems to have been a common one among the early Christians, suggested, perhaps, by "the narrow way" (Mat. 7:11), which alone leads to heaven, and "the way" which Jesus applied to himself. (John 14:6.) The Christians at Damascus may have been converts on the day of Pentecost, who had come hither; or fugitives from persecution at Jerusalem, or both of these classes and their converts. **Men or women**—showing how severe and thorough this persecution was to be. **Bound unto Jerusalem**—for trial before the Sanhedrin, which, alone under Jewish law, could pronounce the sentence of death. "This commission seems to imply the connivance of the Roman government, so that the same conspiracy of Jews and Gentiles which put Christ to death (4:27) pursued his followers even into foreign parts." (ALEXANDER.) The civil authorities at least were not disposed to offer opposition to things pertaining to the religious affairs of the Jews.

3. As he journeyed—pushing on and glad to be nearing his destination. "Usually travelers are not easily susceptible to apparitions, because of the motion and noise." (BENGEL.) Being surrounded with companions was not favorable to an imaginary vision. The journey from Jerusalem to Damascus would require about five days. What route he took can only be conjectured. The most probable supposition is that he went by way of Bethel to Sychar (John 4:5), and then either crossing the Jordan south of the Sea of Galilee near Scythopolis, proceeded to Gadara and thence to Damascus; or from Sychar going north-

to the earth, and heard a voice saying, unto

him Saul, Saul, **why persecutest thou**

* Isa. 63 : 9; Matt. 25 : 40, etc.

ward and crossing the Jordan a little above the sea by Jacob's Bridge, he passed through the desert country on the east of Anti-Lebanon. **He came near Damascus.** A local tradition fixes the spot "not half a mile from the eastern gate of the town, in the midst of an uninclosed cemetery. The present road is here purposely diverted from the direct course for a few yards, leaving apart the space which is the alleged scene of the conversion. The spot thus respected is evidently a portion of the ancient road, and consists entirely of small firmly bedded pebbles. Having never been broken up, it stands alone like a fragment of an elevated causeway. I do not see why this is not likely the true site. But be this as it may, the features of the landscape are the same that Paul saw: On the left Hermon in all its majesty, the long range of Anti-Lebanon, gray and bleak, stretching eastward, the broad plain on either hand with its many-tinted foliage, all around villages embowered in blooming orchards, and just before the bright buildings of the city." (FISH'S *Bible Lands Illustrated*, pp. 598-600.) It has been observed that Saul was arrested in the height of his fury and near the end of his journey and the consummation of his purpose. So God often deals with transgressors. For example, Pharaoh (Exod. 14 : 26); Abimelech (Judg. 9 : 53), Absalom (2 Sam. 18 : 9), Sennacherib (2 Kings 19 : 35) and Haman (Esth. 7 : 10.)

Suddenly there shined—*there flashed.* In suddenness and splendor like lightning. **Around him**—specially encircling *him*, and not his attendants. **From**—according to the most approved reading, *out of heaven*—as it were from the divine presence. It was at noon, and the heavenly light outdazzled the brightness of the sun. (22 : 6; 26 : 12, 13.) It was the glory of the Lord, the Shekinah, so often spoken of in the Old Testament (Exod. 24 : 16; 40 : 31, 35; 1 Kings 8 : 11; Isa. 6 : 3, 4) and manifested on the Mount of Transfiguration (Mark 9 : 2, 3), and to John on Patmos (Rev. 1 : 15-17). While this glorious light about

Saul was as instantaneous as lightning, it is not implied that it was as brief. Yet it must have been of short duration. It appears that in that light Saul saw the Lord Jesus. So Ananias says: "Jesus, who appeared unto thee in the way" (ver. 17); and Barnabas declares that Saul "had seen the Lord in the way" (ver. 27); and Paul frequently affirms that he had seen Jesus, and was thus a witness of his resurrection (22 : 14; 26 : 16; 1 Cor. 9 : 1; 15 : 8). Saul's blindness for three days resulted from this dazzling light (ver. 9; 22 : 11), from which he probably never fully recovered. Dimness of sight may have been the "thorn in the flesh" against which he fervently prayed (2 Cor. 12 : 7), and may account for his failure to recognize the high priest whom he reproved in the council. (23 : 5.) It seems also to throw light on Gal. 4 : 15, where Paul says, "Ye would have plucked out your own eyes and given them to me," and on Gal. 6 : 11 when he speaks of "the large letters I wrote to you with my own hand."

4. Filled with awe and reverence, and in great astonishment, Saul is overpowered and falls **to**, rather *upon the earth*, doubtless from the animal he was riding. (See 22 : 7.) "I fell *unto* the ground," implying more than one merely falling while walking. **And heard a voice**—not merely a sound, but an utterance, **saying to him**, intended for him alone. Yet it was not spoken in Saul's soul, but audibly, for his companions also heard the sound of the voice. (Ver. 7.) **Saul, Saul**—repeated for emphasis. (See Luke 10 : 4; 22 : 31.) The words were spoken in Hebrew (26 : 14)—that is, the Aramaean, the common dialect among the Jews of that day. Accordingly, the shorter Hebrew form of his name is used here, as well as in ver. 17; 22 : 7, 13, and 26 : 14, while the longer Grecised form is found elsewhere in the Acts. **Why persecutest thou me?** Jesus identifies himself with his disciples (Matt. 25 : 40), and makes a personal appeal to Saul's conscience. What motive have you? What wrong have I done you? The

5 me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. *It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.* And he trembling and

astonished said, Lord, ^awhat wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, ^aArise, and go into the city and it shall be told thee what thou must do.

⁵ ch. 5 : 39; Job 9 : 4.

^a ch. 2 : 37; 16 : 30; Luke 3 : 10.

^a Gal. 1 : 11-16.

question was fitted to arouse conviction of the enormous sin he was perpetrating. It is also the utterance of one suffering wrongfully, implying that Saul's conduct was without excuse, and positively wicked. "In what thing, great or small, hast thou been wronged by me, that thou doest these things?" (CHRYSOSTOM.) "Saul strikes in Damascus; Christ suffers in heaven." (HALL.)

5. Who art thou, Lord? Reverential language. Saul may have thought it was an angel, or, perhaps, God himself. But with his doubt there may have come a suspicion of the truth. "Conscience would readily say, 'It is Jesus.'" (BENGEL.) **I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.** Again he identifies himself with his disciples, not only collectively, but also individually. He presses home upon Saul's conscience, that he is a persecutor of the risen, exalted, and glorified Jesus, the Lord and Saviour. Notice he does not style himself the Son of God, but *Jesus* (meaning *Saviour*), or "Jesus the Nazarene" (22:8), the title by which he was generally known, and which Saul doubtless had often used in contempt. How the truth pierced his inmost soul, that he was "a blasphemer and persecutor and injurious." (1 Tim. 1:13.) **It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks—the goads.** These words are found here only in a single Greek manuscript and in some versions and belong to 26:14, which see. They were probably transferred to this passage by some copyist. "The clause itself is a proverbial one of frequent occurrence in the Greek and Latin classics, being found in Pindar, Eschylus, Euripides, Plautus and Terence." (ALEXANDER.)

6. And he trembling and astonished said. These words are found in neither of the three accounts and in no Greek manuscript. **Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto**

him. No Greek manuscript has these words in this place. But similar words are found in 22:10. The whole passage, beginning with "*It is hard*" (ver. 5) and continuing to this point, is found in several ancient versions, including the Latin Vulgate and the Syriac. Erasmus adopted it into the Greek text. It is possible that these early versions may represent Greek manuscripts older than any extant, but textual critics regard it as an interpolation originating in some ancient copyist filling out the passage from parallel accounts. It is, however, appropriate and in accordance with what we might expect, and doubtless presents what is substantially true. **Arise and go into the city**—a test of faith and obedience. The question, **What shall I do, Lord?** (22:10) implied a recognition of Jesus as a Divine Master, and a submission to him. At this point we may regard *regeneration* as having taken place. But the completing of the experience in *conversion*, as a manifest fact to himself and to others, took place later in Damascus under the ministry of Ananias. (ver. 17.) Even the glorified Jesus did not undertake to instruct a penitent inquirer independent of his disciples. How differently was Saul to enter the city from what he expected. Not as a proud representative of the Sanhedrin, but as a humble disciple of the despised Nazarene, to be instructed by one of those whom he had expected to bring bound to Jerusalem. **It shall be told thee what thou must do**—as stated and implied in ver. 17, 18. It appears from 26:16-19 that the Lord here made known to Saul his mission as a minister and an apostle. (Gal. 1:1.) It was reaffirmed by Ananias (22:14, 15), and farther confirmed by our Lord to Saul in a trance in the temple. (22:17-22.) This seems the most natural way to harmonize the three narratives. The account of Luke in this chapter would naturally be the shortest; that before King Agrippa

7 And ^b the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but
8 seeing no man. And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he

saw no man; but they led him by the hand, and brought *him* into Damascus.
9 And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.

^b ch. 22 : 9; Dan. 10 : 7.

the most intense, and that before the Jewish mob the more particular regarding the words of Ananias, "a devout man according to the law." (See on 22 : 14 and 26 : 16.)

7. The men who journeyed with him—those who were to aid Saul in executing his commission, perhaps soldiers or officers of justice. (John 7 : 32.) **Stood speechless**—or *were standing speechless*, amazed and powerless—the pluperfect being here used in the original, in the sense of the imperfect. But in 26 : 14 Paul says, *when we were all fallen to the earth*. In explanation of this seeming discrepancy it may be said that the verb *stood* is used here not as opposed to falling prostrate, but to going forward. In a general way it describes the effect of their astonishment, in overpowering them and fixing them to the spot, unmovable and speechless. (8 : 35; Luke 5 : 2.) But in a moment, and moments would seem long at such a time, they fall to the earth as Saul had done under the greater revelation he received. They may have fallen just as they began to hear the voice. The words "*when we were*," etc., are in harmony, if they do not imply just such an explanation as this. So Dr. Hackett and others. A less natural explanation is given by Bengel and some others: That all fell to the earth at first, but had risen before Saul of their own accord. **Hearing a**—rather, *hearing indeed the voice*. An apparent discrepancy is found in 22 : 9. "They *heard not* the voice that spake to me," which naturally means they understood not the voice that spake to me personally. For examples of this use of the word *hear*, see Mark 4 : 33; 1 Cor. 14 : 2; John 6 : 60; Gal. 4 : 29, 31. Saul's companions heard indeed a voice, but did not so hear as to know what it said. We often say that we do not hear a public speaker when we mean that though we hear his voice, yet from indistinct or low utterances, we fail to understand him. So Saul re-

ceived a clear impression of what was said to him, while his companions received an indefinite one. He heard and understood the words, which to them were only as a sound. See John 12 : 28, 29, where are recorded the words that came to Jesus, but the multitude understood them not, but thought it thundered. **But seeing no man**—seeming to imply that Saul had seen, or did see, at this time, Jesus the Christ.

8. And Saul arose—or, more strictly, *was aroused or raised*. For a time he lay upon the ground overpowered with the glory of the divine presence. His companions rise from their prostrate position. They are ready to help him; he finds an effort necessary to break the spell that holds him, and to rise upon his feet. His obedience is partially passive, but not entirely so, for there was the act of the will, and an effort in rising, standing, opening the eyes, and walking into the city. And this obedience is the first indication of an inward change. **When his eyes were opened**—implying that they were closed while lying upon the ground. **He saw no man**—being blind. The highest critical authorities, however, prefer here the stronger reading, *He saw nothing*, totally blind, and hence the greater necessity of being **led by the hand**. **They brought**—conducted him into Damascus. Not going, as he had expected, as a leader, to seize and imprison, but led by the hands of others, blind, trembling, and helpless, through the gateway of the city and the street called Straight, to lodge alone in the house of Judas. (Ver. 11.)

9. Three days—probably that day, the next, and the day following. (See Matt. 12 : 39, 40.) According to Jewish reckoning it may have been either one whole day and portions of two others, or three whole days. **Without sight**—*not seeing*, the expression implying that the blindness was not necessarily

10 And there was a certain disciple at Damascus ^c named Ananias ; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And 11 he said, Behold, I *am here*, Lord. And

the Lord *said* unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for *one* called Saul, ^d of Tarsus. For, behold,

^c ch. 22 : 12.

^d ch. 21 : 39 ; 22 : 3.

permanent ; yet it did not pass away of itself, as we learn from ver. 17, 18. **Neither did eat nor drink.** He fasts and prays (ver. 11) alone. Christians are afraid of him ; he cannot consult them. Jews cannot sympathize with him. The remembrance of Stephen and the disciples whom he had persecuted fills him with shame : his opposition to and hatred of Jesus fills him with penitence. The words of Jesus, "Why persecutest thou me?" must have rung in his ears ; while Christ's directing and prophetic words aroused his hopes. His whole being is absorbed in agonizing prayer and longing expectation. The lessons he now learned are told us in Rom. 7 : 7-12.

10. Ananias—nothing is known of him beyond what is said in the Acts. He is here spoken of by the historian as **a certain disciple**, but not the only one in Damascus. (Ver. 19.) Paul in his conciliatory address before the Jewish mob very naturally omits this designation, and speaks of him as "a devout man according to the law, well reported by all the Jews that dwell there." (22 : 12.) Before Agrippa, Paul had no occasion to mention him. **The Lord**—Christ as in ver. 5-17. **A vision**—the word thus translated is found here, in ver. 12 ; 7 : 31 ; 10 : 3, 17, 19 ; 11 : 5 ; 12 : 9 ; 16 : 9, 10 ; 18 : 9 ; Matt. 17 : 9, but not elsewhere in the New Testament. It does not mean something unreal, but a sight divinely given and actually seen. "By vision in the Bible is generally meant an experience in which the person retains his consciousness, in which respect it differs from a trance, and the object shown to him possesses a real existence, in which respect it differs from a dream." (ABBOTT.) (See in Old Testament 1 Sam. 3 : 15 ; Dan. 2 : 19 ; 7 : 2 ; 8 : 1.)

11. Arise and go—implying a change of position and also motion ; but the words do not determine the position of Ananias, whether he was lying down

or sitting up. **Into, upon the street**, strictly an *alley* or *lane*. (Luke 14 : 21.) **Called Straight**—perhaps in distinction from some which were crooked. There is at present in Damascus a long straight street running from the eastern to the western gate. In apostolic times it was a noble thoroughfare, one hundred feet wide, divided by Corinthian colonnades into three avenues, the central one for foot passengers, the side passages for vehicles and horsemen. Remains of the colonnades are said still to be seen, though the street is contracted into a narrow one. The guides call it Straight ; the natives Street of Bazaars ; others know it as Queen Street. Tradition places the house of Judas in this street. It is doubtful whether such a thoroughfare would have been styled by such a word as *alley*. Besides, the manner of the direction, "the street called Straight," would naturally suggest a less important street than the principal thoroughfare of the city. **Judas** was a common name among Jews, but nothing more is known of this one. **For one called Saul**—implying that Ananias was not acquainted with him, though he had heard of him. (Ver. 13.) **Of Tarsus**—the city where he was born. (22 : 3.) This was "no mean city" (21 : 39), but the chief city and capital of Cilicia in Asia Minor, and built on both sides of the river Cydnus. Xenophon describes it as a great and flourishing city, and Strabo praises it as a seat of science and learning. It was the rival of Athens and Alexandria, and many distinguished men were educated there. It still exists under the name of *Tersous*, and contains about thirty thousand inhabitants. **Behold, he prayeth**—has been and is now praying. Not as formerly as a Pharisee (Luke 18 : 11), but as a penitent, seeking pardon and direction. His former supplications were unworthy the name of prayer. His praying and the answer given (ver. 12) indicate an inner change. The fact is

12 he prayeth, and hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting *his* hand on him, that he might receive his sight. Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints

* ch. 8: 3. † 1 Cor. 1: 2; 2 Tim. 2: 22. 16; Eph. 3: 7, 8; 2 Tim. 1: 11. † Rom. 11: 13; Gal. 2: 7, 8. † ch. 25: 22, 23; 26: 27; 24. k ch. 13: 46; 28: 17-23.

14 at Jerusalem: and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all ^fthat 15 call on thy name. But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for ^hhe is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before ^bthe Gentiles, and ^kkings, ^land

stated to assure Ananias that Saul was a fit subject to visit, and needed his attention and ministry.

12. Hath seen—or saw, a man. Saul received his vision first. The two visions confirmed each other, as in the case of Cornelius and Peter. (10: 3, 17.) The word **vision** is omitted by several of the oldest manuscripts, but whether omitted or retained, the meaning is the same. **A man named Ananias**—this indicates that Ananias was a stranger to Saul, and now is first made known to him by name. **Putting his hand, or hands, on him**—to encourage his faith, and as a symbol of authority and of power in restoring Saul's sight. (See on ver. 17.) It is noted by Chrysostom that this commission is entrusted to an unknown disciple, that it might not be said that Paul's apostleship depended on any human teaching.

13. Ananias answered, etc. He hesitates, and states his misgivings with great frankness and simplicity. Such instances of hesitation and unwillingness are common in Scripture. Very marked were those of Moses (Exod. 3: 11-13), and Jeremiah. (Jer. 1: 6.) "The objections of Ananias and the removal of them by the Lord display in a very touching manner the childlike relation of a believing soul to its Redeemer. Ananias speaks with him as a man does to his friend." (OLSHAUSEN.) **Lord, I have heard, etc.** Can it be possible that I am sent on such an errand to Saul of Tarsus! The answer shows that Saul had attained great notoriety, and that some time had elapsed since he began his persecution. Disciples may have fled from Jerusalem to Damascus; letters also had doubtless been received from the persecuted brethren. The unbelieving Jews also would hear of Saul's terrible work. (22: 19.) **He hath done**—rather, *He did to thy saints*—the first time that the fol-

lowers of Christ are called *saints*, styled before this "disciples" (6: 1) or "believers." (5: 14.) By this designation Christians are indicated as those whom God has chosen out from the world (John 17: 14, 16), separated and consecrated to his service, and by the Holy Spirit made partakers of salvation in the kingdom of God. (1 Peter 2: 9; Rom. 1: 7.)

14. Ananias' great surprise may have been coupled with a fear, least "even now only evil to the cause of Christ was to be dreaded after his contemplated restoration to sight." (MEYER.) **And here he hath authority, etc.** How he learned this cannot be known. Saul may have visited other cities on his way (26: 11), the news of his coming preceded him, or his companions may have made known his mission to Damascus, or perhaps letters had been received by the disciples from brethren in Jerusalem, warning them of his coming. **All that call on—**in their own behalf, or *all who invoke thy name.* (2: 21: 7: 59.) It is evident that Ananias was speaking to Christ; and that apostolic Christians were accustomed to pray to him. It was characteristic; they were *the callers upon Christ.* (Ver. 21; 22: 16; 1 Cor. 1: 2; 2 Tim. 2: 22.)

15. The Lord repeats the simple command, Go. Omit thy way, not being needed in the translation. At the same time the Lord adds a reason for going, which would also allay any fears: **For he is a chosen vessel unto me**—an *instrument* selected and elected by God for a great work in my kingdom. (Rom. 1: 1; 1 Cor. 1: 1; Gal. 1: 1.) It is a Hebraistic idea, as of an implement moulded and prepared in the hands of the potter. (Isa. 45: 9, 11; Jer. 18: 4; Rom. 9: 21-23; 2 Cor. 4: 7; 2 Tim. 2: 20, 21.) The purpose for which he is chosen: **To bear my name**—proclaiming me as the Messiah and the Redeemer.

16 the children of Israel: ¹for I will show how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.

17 ^m And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the

Lord, *even* Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and ¹⁸ ⁿ be filled with the Holy Spirit. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight

¹ ch. 21 : 11 ; 2 Cor. 11 : 23-27.

^m ch. 22 : 12, 13.

ⁿ ch. 8 : 17.

Before—publicly. By implication, holding up my Messianic name as a banner. **The Gentiles**—omit the article: *Gentiles, and kings, and sons of Israel*. He was the apostle to the Gentiles (Gal. 2 : 7, 8), but at the same time he preached to the Jews whenever he had opportunity. (13 : 46.) He also witnessed *before kings*, such as Agrippa at Caesarea (26 : 1, 13), and the Emperor Nero at Rome (2 Tim. 4 : 13), and before Roman governors as Sergius Paulus, Gallio, Felix, and Festus. (13 : 47 ; 24 : 25 ; 25 : 23 ; 26 : 32.) Jesus thus announced to Ananias the commission of Saul, and Ananias appears to have declared its substance to Saul (22 : 15), although it is not here directly affirmed. Jesus seems to have previously announced it to Saul (26 : 16-18), and afterward repeated it when he was about to actually engage in his work. (22 : 23.)

16. For—introducing a reason why and how Saul would be a chosen vessel: *For* in this capacity and work **I will show him**—in his experience, and *indicate* to him by my providence, and by prophetic intimations, what sufferings he must endure, in professing and proclaiming my name. In bearing my name he must suffer as well as do. "*I will show him*" is in Greek a most expressive phrase, meaning: I will partly show him, or begin to show him, I am giving him a glimpse of what he is to suffer. The pronoun has more emphasis in the original, and may perhaps mean, I and not thou; that is, do thy part as it has been assigned to thee, and I will do mine, by disclosing to him what he is to suffer." (ALEXANDER.) In 20 : 23 ; 21 : 11-13, we may see how these sufferings were made known to him from time to time. See 2 Cor. 11 : 23-28 for a list of his sufferings. (See John 16 : 33 ; 1 Cor. 4 : 9-13.)

17. Ananias at once obeys, goes and finds the house of Judas (ver. 11) and Saul. **Putting his hands upon**

him. (See on ver. 11, and 5 : 17.) **Brother Saul**—not merely as a Jew, but as one of the household of faith. Ananias recognizes Saul's new spiritual relationship. **The Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee**—*the one seen by thee, in the way*. In after days Paul declares that, as a mark of his apostleship, he had seen the Lord. (1 Cor. 9 : 1 ; 15 : 8.) **Hath sent me**—The Lord had sent Ananias to minister to Saul that he might be healed of his blindness, and be brought out into the glorious liberty of the gospel. The substance of what Ananias further said to him is recorded in 22 : 14-16, regarding his great work as a preacher of the gospel and his immediate duty of baptism. In all this it does not appear that the putting on of hands had any reference to Saul's ordination, or to a rite of confirmation.

18. There fell from his eyes—implying something real ; not a mere sensation, as if something fell. **As it had been scales**—resembling scales. Luke's minute description betrays the physician. Hippocrates, the prince and father of real medical science, applies the name "scales" to a certain disease of the eyes. In the Apocrypha (Tobit 11 : 8, 13, 16) a "whiteness" or incrustation is mentioned as peeling off the eyes of Tobit, and he receives his sight. The dazzling splendor of the divine light had produced a kind of film over the sight (22 : 11), which suddenly and hence miraculously fell off, through the power of the Lord Jesus (ver. 17), while Ananias was speaking to him. **And he received sight**—*looked up*, which to him was a token of the divine favor, and a confirmation of the truth and reality of what he had seen, felt, and heard. **Forthwith** is not found in the best manuscripts, and is not necessary in this connection. Nothing is here said of his receiving the Holy Spirit ; but

forthwith, and arose, and was baptized. 19 And when he had received meat, he was strengthened.

°Then was Saul certain days with the 20 disciples which were at Damascus. And straightway he preached Christ in the

° ch. 26 : 20.

° Gal. 1 : 23.

from ver. 17 it is reasonable to conclude that the gifts of the Spirit were conferred on him, either now, or after his baptism. It is not necessary in this instance to suppose this connected with laying on of hands, but may have occurred similar to the bestowment upon Cornelius and his company. (10 : 44.) The fact that the gifts of the Spirit, of which he enjoyed great abundance (1 Cor. 14 : 18), is not here mentioned seems significant. This, with the obscurity of Ananias, may be among those things that point to Paul as independent of human authority, "an apostle, not of men, neither through man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father." (Gal. 1 : 1.) **And arose**—showing that he accepted Christ and proposed to enter actively upon his service. **And was baptized**—in compliance with the Lord's command, and the exhortation of Ananias (22 : 16), perhaps in one of the rivers of Damascus (2 Kings 5 : 12), or very likely in the reservoir in the court of the house of Judas, such as those with which the better class of houses were supplied. That he became a member of the church of Damascus is implied in the next verse.

19. His fast now ended. Had taken meat—*having taken food*—**he was strengthened.** He had been weakened, not only by the three days fasting, but also through the overwhelming divine influence, and his intense mental suffering and activity. At this point the account of his conversion properly ends.

Luke now very briefly records Saul's residence at Damascus, during which time he "went into Arabia and returned again unto Damascus." (Gal. 1 : 17.) The whole time thus occupied was three years (Gal. 1 : 18), which may be taken, according to Jewish reckoning, either for three complete years, or for one whole year and portions of two other years. The **certain days** of this verse, probably several weeks, and "the many days" of ver. 23, with the inter-

vening time, embrace the three years from Saul's conversion to his first visit to Jerusalem after that event. His language in Gal. 1 : 17, naturally implies that he went into Arabia soon after his conversion; and his object in going there appears to have been, not to preach the gospel, but for the study of the Scriptures and for meditation and prayer. (See o. ver. 26.) This may suggest the reason why Luke passes over this sojourn in Arabia, since it belonged to his inner and private life, and contained nothing of interest and instruction for Christians of after ages. Nor is it strange that Luke, in a brief sketch of Paul's conversion and early life, should pass over this event. Paul does it himself in his rapid narrative in 22 : 16 : 17. The exact point of this visit to Arabia may be fixed immediately after the "*certain days*" of this verse. Arabia was the well-known peninsula, bounded by Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Mesopotamia, Babylonia, the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea, and the Ocean. It was often used generally and indefinitely. Some suppose that it may have included in this instance Damascus, and that Saul's residence there was his sojourn in Arabia. But this is inconsistent with Gal. 1 : 17, 18, where Paul says he "returned again to Damascus." **Then Saul, etc.** Omit *Saul*, and read, *And he was*, or more exactly, *he became with the disciples*—he was with them as one of them, not only socially, but a member of the company of believers at Damascus. The language implies more than that he was a visitor with them. His character had undergone a change, and a consequent change of relationship to the disciples is recognized by them, and acted upon by himself.

20. And straightway—immediately after he was strengthened and became one of the Christian brotherhood (ver. 19), during the "*certain days*." **He preached Christ**—rather, according to the highest critical authorities, *Jesus*, the one he had met in the way.

synagogues, ^q that he is the Son of God. 21 But all that heard *him* were amazed, and said, ^r Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief

22 priests? But Saul ^s increased the more in strength, ^t and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ.

23 And after that many days were fulfilled, ^u the Jews took counsel to kill him:

^q 1 John 4 : 14.

^r Gal. 1 : 13, 23.

^s Job 17 : 9.

^t ch. 18 : 28.

^u ch. 23 : 12; 25 : 3.

He proclaimed Jesus, that he is the Son of God, a divine being, sharing the divine glory and worthy of divine honor. "The Son of God" was one of the Jewish titles of the Messiah. So Nathanael and Peter addressed Jesus. (John 1 : 49; Matt. 16 : 16.) But Saul had met the glorified Jesus and had received more than the Jewish conception. He accepted his Divine Sonship, and proclaimed it, which included his Messiahship. Afterward we are told (ver. 22) he gave special attention to the latter, "proving that this is the Christ." **In the synagogues**—which to a large extent were the meeting places and pulpits of the early Christians. (13 : 14; 17 : 1; 18 : 4. See on ch. 6 : 9.) It was a marked design of Providence that the synagogues should thus facilitate the spread of the gospel.

21. All that heard him were amazed—that is, the Jews. The disciples in Damascus had heard of his conversion. (Ver. 19.) **Said**—within themselves and to one another. **Destroyed**—put to death. Paul uses the same word in Gal. 1 : 13, 23. The Jews put it strongly. It was indeed a cause for astonishment to them; a miracle of the gracious Spirit, that such an one should be so changed, and that too in a day! **That called on this name**—of Jesus. This characteristic of the early disciples again comes into view. (See on ver. 14.) **Unto the chief priests**—representing the Sanhedrin, as its leading members. (See on ver. 1.)

22. But Saul increased, etc.—was strengthened still more in faith, purpose and knowledge and in apprehending and forcibly and powerfully presenting the truth. (See 1 bil. 4 : 13; Eph. 3 : 16-19.) He became stronger in his spiritual life and as a preacher. This seems to be a general statement, true not only of his early days at Damascus, but also of the "many days" (ver. 23) after his return from Arabia. **Con-**

founded—*confused* and greatly *perplexed the Jews*. His arguments threw them into a state of bewilderment. (2 : 6.) **Proving**—by *bringing together* the words of the prophets and the life and work of Jesus, and showing their agreement, or *demonstrating that this is very Christ*, by showing the fulfillment of the Messianic predictions in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Thus the Jews were put to silence, and their perplexity and chagrin ripen at length into bitter hatred and persecution. (Ver. 23.)

23-30. SAUL'S FLIGHT FROM DAMASCUS, RETURN TO JERUSALEM, AND WITHDRAWAL TO TARSUS. (22 : 17-21; 26 : 20; 2 Cor. 11 : 22, 32, 33; Gal. 1 : 18-24; Eph. 3 : 8; Phil. 3 : 5, 6.) The period embraced in these verses occupied several months, perhaps a year; probably during parts of A. D. 37 and 38. Saul had returned from Arabia, where he may have spent a year or more in the vicinity of Petra, amid the rocks of Edom, and in the great desert of Mount Sinai (Gal. 4 : 25), in retirement, meditation, and study. (See on ver. 19.) He had grown in spiritual life and as a preacher, and was becoming at Damascus what Stephen had been at Jerusalem. (6 : 10. See on ver. 22.) Compare *Harmonic Arrangement* on § 17.

23. Many days were fulfilled—completed. A considerable time is meant. (Ver. 43; 18 : 18.) It may indicate an indefinitely longer or shorter period. Thus in Paul's voyage to Rome, when dreary days seemed like weeks and months, it is said, *sailed slowly many days* (27 : 7), meaning probably about twelve days. On the other hand, in a brief narrative it may stand for two or three years. See 1 Kings 2 : 38, 39, where "many days" were "three years." Thus the phrase here may include Saul's sojourn in Arabia and his subsequent residence at Damascus; or it may be limited to the latter. In

24 but their laying wait was known of Saul. And they watched the gates day and 25 night to kill him. Then the disciples

took him by night, and ^alet him down by the wall in a basket.

^a Josh. 2 : 15 ; 1 Sam. 19 : 12.

either case, we may suppose that the larger part of the three years before returning to Jerusalem was spent in Arabia. (Gal. 1 : 17, 18.) This may account for the comparative ignorance of the disciples at Jerusalem concerning him. (Ver. 26.) This second residence at Damascus, however, must have been longer than the first (ver. 19), probably from three to six months. This would be sufficient time for the beginning and growth of the organized opposition against him. **The Jews took counsel—plotted together deliberately to kill him.** At first they were amazed that the most violent persecutor of the Nazarenes had himself become an ardent disciple. Then they attempted to meet him in argument, but were put to silence. Then followed hatred, bitterness, organized opposition, and persecution. The Jews at Damascus had no legal right to *kill him*, but through the governor (called the Ethnarch) under Aretas, the king, they might accomplish it. (2 Cor. 11 : 32.) It appears that Aretas, king of Arabia, who was father-in-law to Herod Antipas, got possession of Damascus upon the death of the Emperor Tiberius, A. D. 37, and held it for a year or more.

24. But their laying wait, their plot, was known, became known to Saul, probably by report. (See 23 : 16.) **They watched, were watching** all the time, **day and night**, while Saul made his escape. In 2 Cor. 11 : 32, Paul says that at this time "the governor under Aretas, the king, kept guard over the city of the Damascenes." It thus appears that the guard consisted of these Jews or that the Jews were watching in connection with the soldiers who guarded the gates. The two accounts are perfectly consistent with each other; they throw light upon and confirm each other. Luke in the Acts shows who were the instigators of this plot, namely, the Jews; Paul to the Corinthians tells us the military or the legal power by which it was to be carried out.

25. Both Luke and Paul (2 Cor. 11 : 33) relate the manner of his escape, "by the wall in a basket." Luke tells the persons *by whom*, namely, **the disciples**, some of them doubtless his own converts, and the *time*, **by night**. Paul adds, "through a window," and that he "escaped his hands," that is, of the governor of Damascus, who had been induced by the Jews to assist them in their plot and to accomplish in some way, legally or illegally, the death of Saul. **Let him down by—rather, through the wall.** The spies at Jericho (Josh. 2 : 15) and David (1 Sam. 19 : 12) escaped in a similar way. "The common view is that the house where Paul was secreted was built on the wall of the city, with a window projecting over it; and hence it could be said, according to Luke's narrative in the Acts, that Paul was 'let down through the wall,' without any reference to the house; or, as in the epistle to the Corinthians, that he was 'let down through a window through the wall.' . . . I saw houses built on the walls, with overhanging windows, in several of the Eastern cities. . . . Possibly another explanation may be the correct one. A few steps to the left of Bab-es-Shurkeb, the gate on the east side of Damascus, I observed two or three windows in the external face of the wall, opening into houses on the inside of the city. If Saul was let down through such a window (which belongs equally to the house and the wall), it would be still more exact to interchange the two expressions." (DR. HACKETT, *Illustrations of Scripture*, pp. 76, 77.) **In a basket**, the same word used in Matt. 15 : 37, *a plaited grain or provision basket*. Another word is used in 2 Cor. 11 : 33, meaning a *basket made of ropes*. The two words might be used interchangeably in speaking of the same event. "As I stood with a friend, who resided at Damasens, . . . a couple of men came to the top of the wall with a round, shallow basket, full of rubbish, which they emptied over the wall. 'Such a

26 And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple.

27 But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how

† Gal. 1: 17, 18.

* ch. 4: 36; 13: 2.

• Gal. 1: 18, 19.

basket,' said my friend, 'the people use here for almost every sort of thing. If they are digging a well, and wish to send a man down into it, they put him into such a basket; and that those who aided Paul's escape should have used such a basket for the purpose was entirely natural, according to the present customs of the country.' . . . Pilgrims are admitted into the monastery at Mount Sinai in a similar manner." (DR. HACKETT, *Illustrations of Scripture*, p. 77.)

26. And when Saul was come to Jerusalem. Instead of *Saul* read *he*, according to the best manuscripts. The object of Saul's coming was to make the acquaintance of Peter (not to receive authority from him), whom he knew to be a prominent leader and pillar in the church. (Gal. 1: 18; 2: 9.) Being driven from Damascus, it was natural that he should seek the mother church at Jerusalem; and that his Christian impulse should lead him to preach Jesus in the very place where he had most violently persecuted his disciples. (22: 19, 20.) "He had left Jerusalem armed with full power to root up the heresy spread by the followers of Jesus. He returned to the capital poor, despised, a proscribed outlaw, his brilliant earthly prospects blasted, only burning to preach the Name of the Crucified, whose devoted followers he had once persecuted so relentlessly." (HOWSON AND SPENCE.) **Assayed**—*he was attempting*, but failed in his attempt. **To join himself to the disciples**, including the apostles (ver. 27), not merely socially, but to them as a company of believers, as a church. **They were all afraid of him**—they were distrusting him; and though they may have heard of his conversion, yet that was three years ago (Gal. 1: 18), and they did not really believe him to be a disciple, but thought he was trying to attach himself to them from improper motives, perhaps to persecute them and seize their leaders.

His reported conversion seemed incredible; they were prejudiced against him. "The sudden appearance of Voltaire in a circle of Christians, claiming to be one of them, would have been something like this return of Saul to Jerusalem as a professed disciple." (HACKETT.) All this implies that Saul had lived mostly a retired life since his conversion; that the large part of the time had been spent in Arabia, and that too probably not in public labors, but in the study of the Scriptures and in communion with God; in order that he might not confer with flesh and blood (Gal. 1: 16), but with the Lord through prayer and the Spirit, and thus gain the needed preparation for the great work to which he had been called at his conversion. The news of his recent preaching and peril in Damascus, doubtless had not reached them; and this might be the more probable, in these troublous times, while Damascus was under the power of King Aretas.

27. This embarrassing situation of Saul was relieved by Barnabas who appears to have been previously acquainted with him. **Barnabas** (4: 36) **took him**, as one friend takes another to introduce him. "Tradition asserts that Joseph [Barnabas] had been a scholar of Gamaliel, and the same feeling which led him to join a school of which one peculiarity was its permission of Greek learning, might have led him earlier to take a few hours' sail from Cyprus to see what could be learnt in the University of Tarsus. If so, he would naturally have come into contact with the family of Saul, and the friendship thus commenced would be continued at Jerusalem. It had been broken by the conversion of Barnabas, it is now renewed by the conversion of Saul." (FARRAR, *Life and Work of St. Paul*, pp. 132, 133.) Saul, upon coming to Jerusalem, had probably stopped first with his sister or some relative. (23: 16.) **Brought him to**

he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. And he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem. And he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against

the ^bGreeks. ^cBut they went about to slay him. *Which* when the brethren knew, they brought him down to Cæsarea, and sent him forth to ^dTarsus.

^b ch. 6 : 1 ; 11 : 20.

^c ver. 23 ; 2 Cor. 11 : 26.

^d Gal. 1 : 21.

the apostles—Peter and James (Gal. 1:18-19) being the only two present at Jerusalem, the other apostles being probably away preaching. **Declared**—related fully to them **how Saul saw the Lord in the way**, the manner and circumstances, time and place; and that the Lord **had spoken, talked to** Saul, giving him instructions. He whom the Lord had called and instructed, the apostles should receive. Barnabas shows that Saul, as a witness of the resurrection of the Lord, and as one commissioned by him, stood on a level with them. And more, for Saul had proved his trustworthiness by his obedience, in preaching **boldly at Damascus**, whither he had gone to persecute. **In the name of Jesus**—as his disciple confessing and proclaiming him as the Messiah, his sovereign Lord.

28. The kind offices of Barnabas proved successful. Saul is received into the friendship and fellowship of the disciples. **He was with them**—as a brother and preacher, for fifteen days. (Gal. 1:18.) **Coming in and going out**—associated with them privately, publicly, and officially. How far they recognized his ministry, and whether they at all regarded his apostleship, cannot be certainly decided. It was not till fourteen years later that he received from Peter, John, and James the right hand of fellowship as an apostle to the Gentiles. (Gal. 2:1, 9.)

29. As he had done at Damascus, so here at Jerusalem Saul **spake boldly and freely** in the name of the Lord. Thus far the passage is closely connected with the preceding verse, giving a general view of what he did in this brief visit at Jerusalem. **And disputed**, etc. According to the highest critical authorities this should read: *And was speaking and disputing against the Grecian Jews*. He not only talked in an instructive way, but he reasoned and discussed the subject with the Hellen-

ists or foreign Jews. Saul was one of this class, and was familiar with the Greek, and had doubtless associated with some of them in former years. Thus he enters into Stephen's labors, possibly arguing with some of them who contended with Stephen, and with like results. (6:8-10.) Baffled with Saul's arguments, they propose to resort to force, **they went about**—that is, *they were* seeking the means and opportunity, not as yet openly, but underhandedly, **to slay him**. The same verb is used as in ver. 23. Some have thought that one of the festivals was now going on, to which these foreign Jews, being very jealous for the law, had come.

30. **Which when the brethren knew**—*And the brethren learning*, or discovering it. This shows that these foreign Jews were working in secret and plotting, very much as they had done with Stephen, only their plans were not developed as yet. Notice that it is now said, *the brethren*, they being no longer afraid of Saul, but one with him. And as brethren they act together and promptly. This is the first time the disciples are distinctively termed *brethren* in the Acts, though they are thus addressed in 6:3. They are frequently thus styled after this. (11:1, 29; 12:17.) They are as those who constitute one family. Saul acts on their advice and departs, although at first he is unwilling to go (22:17-21), but desired to remain and preach, taking up Stephen's work where it was broken off. He felt he was peculiarly fitted for it by experience. But in a trance the Lord assures him that the Jews will not hear him and commands him: "Depart, for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles." It is very probable that Saul would not have now left Jerusalem, had it not been for this revelation. Thus both accounts are in perfect harmony. Luke gives the external historical cause, begun and consum-

Prosperity of the church; Peter visits Lydda and Joppa.

31 THEN had the churches rest through-

out all Judæa and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and "walking in the fear of the Lord," and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, were multiplied.

• Neh. 5 : 9. † John 14 : 16-18; 16 : 7-15; Rom. 8 : 15-17, 26; Gal. 5 : 22.

mated by the brethren; Paul gives the internal and divine reason, which led him to fall in with the plans of his brethren. About eighteen years after this Paul appeals to the brevity of this visit, and other circumstances connected with it, as an evidence that he did not depend on the church at Jerusalem or the apostles, for his apostolic commission. (Gal. 1 : 18-24.) **They brought him**—conducted him to **Cæsarea**, about sixty miles northwest of Jerusalem. (See on 3 : 40.) **And sent him forth**—probably by ship to **Tarsus**—his native city, and the capital of Cilicia. (See on ver. 11.) In reference to this visit to his native country Paul says (Gal. 1 : 21), "I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia." He may have sailed to Seleucia, the port of Antioch, and then passed northward through Syria and westward into Cilicia to Tarsus. Mr. Lewin (*Life and Epistles of St. Paul*, i. 77) suggests that Saul may have undergone one of the shipwrecks, of which he speaks (2 Cor. 11 : 25), and thus his course was determined. He appears to have made Tarsus and its vicinity his headquarters, until sought out about four years later by Barnabas. (11 : 25.) During this period he probably planted churches in Syria and Cilicia, which he visited on his second missionary journey. (15 : 4.)

31-43. PEACE AND PROSPERITY OF THE CHURCH. PETER VISITS LYDDA AND JOPPA. The healing of Æneas, the sickness, death, and raising to life of Dorcas. Large gatherings at Lydda, Sharon, and Joppa. These events must have occupied many months, probably a year or two, about A. D., 38 and 39. This section prepares the way for the conversion of Cornelius.

31. Then . . . rest. Rather, *Therefore . . . peace*. The Christian community throughout Palestine, here designated by its three divisions, **Judæa and Galilee and Samaria**, were in a state of tranquillity, being free from persecution, as a consequence of the

events just related. The persecution would cease in foreign cities with the conversion of Saul; but it must have continued in Judæa, for Saul was not the only persecutor. (Ver. 29; 6 : 9.) His reported conversion, regarded as treachery to the cause, would probably increase the blind rage of persecution for a time. It had doubtless subsided before Saul's visit to Jerusalem; but his presence gave it a new impetus for a few days, and after his departure it ceased entirely. It is unnecessary to suppose with some that the attempt of the Emperor Caligula to profane the temple at Jerusalem (A. D., 39, 40) diverted the minds of the Jews from the Christians, and was thus the cause of the persecution ceasing. The persecution had spent its force. Besides, Caligula's attempt probably occurred a little later than this visit of Saul, and in its time may have had some of the effects supposed.

The churches—this is the reading of some good manuscripts, but the oldest and best have the singular, *church*, which reading is preferred by the highest critical authorities. Dr. Broadus limits the word here to "the original church at Jerusalem, whose members were by the persecution widely scattered throughout Judæa and Samaria and Galilee, and held meetings wherever they were, but still belonged to the one original organization. When Paul wrote to the Galatians, nearly twenty years later, these separate meetings had been organized into distinct churches; and so he speaks (Gal. 1 : 22), in reference to that same period, of 'the churches in Judæa which were in Christ.'" (Com. on Matt. 16 : 18.) If, however, distinct churches had been organized in Samaria and elsewhere in Palestine, then the word would naturally apply to the collective membership of those churches, who were bound together by a common brotherhood to Christ, their head, and by one Spirit. Or possibly the word *church* might here be used ideally and abstractly, meaning the

32 And it came to pass, as Peter passed
 throughout all *quarters*, he came down

also to the saints which dwelt at Lydda.
 33 And there he found a certain man named

§ ch. 8 : 14.

local church, wherever found in that region, and hence true of all those churches—that they enjoyed peace and prosperity. But whichever view is preferred, there is no ground here or elsewhere in the New Testament for applying the word church to an association or confederation of churches. The local church is the only one spoken of, as an external organization, having functions, such as assembling together, exercising discipline, appointing officers, etc. Indeed, what may be styled the church general is nowhere spoken of or implied in the New Testament as an organization. (See on 5 : 11.) On the import of the word, and on the general subject, able discussions are found in *The Christian Review*. (Vol. 22, pp. 593-620; vol. 20, p. 430 f.; vol. 11, p. 64 f.)

Edified—*built up* spiritually, in internal growth, faith, and piety. (1 Cor. 8 : 1; 14 : 4, 17; 1 Thess. 5 : 11.) **Walking**—conducting themselves and advancing in Christian life and activity. **The fear of the Lord**—a devout and reverential practice of true religion. **In the comfort**, or *by the consolation* and helpful presence **of the Holy Spirit, were multiplied**, increased in numbers. The Holy Spirit was present, giving power to believers, and by his awakening influence leading men to hear and receive the gospel. The Greek word translated *comfort* is closely allied to the title given to the Holy Spirit, “the Comforter” or Helper. (John 14 : 16.)

32. From Saul the narrative turns to Peter, who is last mentioned in connection with the work in Samaria. (8 : 14, 25.) The peaceful condition of affairs (ver. 31) is improved by Peter in visiting the discipleship outside of Jerusalem. **As Peter passed throughout all quarters**—*passed through or among them all*. There is no word in the original standing for *quarters*. Hence some supply *places* (15 : 36; 26 : 20); others supply *saints*. (20 : 25; 21 : 28; Rom. 15 : 28.) More strictly the word *all* refers to the saints whom Peter was visiting, and is implied by what follows. **As he came down also to the saints at Lydda**,

so he had been visiting the saints elsewhere. Of course, he visited all the places where believers were in any numbers, or held religious gatherings. The fact that the word *saints*, and not church or churches is used, deserves attention. Things may have been in a formative state. Believers throughout the country may have been regarded as connected with the church at Jerusalem, and holding meetings, or, according to modern phraseology, holding missions, and not separated into independent churches. Peter's visitation among them may have had reference to both their spiritual state and to questions of organization and efficient work. As a result churches may have been organized in many places. (See on ver. 31.) Notice also the four names by which the followers of Jesus were called before they were named Christians—disciples (1 : 15), believers (2 : 44), saints (9 : 13), brethren. (9 : 30.) **Lydda**, Lod of the Old Testament, a Benjamite town. (1 Chron. 8 : 12.) It is situated in the plain of Sharon, on the road from Jerusalem to Joppa, about twenty-seven miles northwest from the former, and eleven miles from the latter. It was a city of considerable size, and a seat of a famous Jewish school. It was ruined in the Jewish war and afterward rebuilt by the Romans, and called Diospolis, “Jove's City.” It now bears its ancient name *Ludd* or *Lydd*, and is a village of about two thousand inhabitants, with some ruins, and surrounded by gardens and orchards. It is not mentioned elsewhere in the New Testament.

33. **A certain man named Æneas**. This name is not exactly identical with the Trojan name Enéas. The former is accented in English on the first syllable, the latter on the second. From his Grecian name it is inferred that he was probably a Grecian Jew. He was not probably a professed disciple, as he is styled *a certain man*. But it is also probable that he became a believer at or about the time of his cure, since “faith was usually required

Eneas, which had kept his bed eight 34 years, and was sick of the palsy. And Peter said unto him, Eneas, ^b Jesus Christ maketh thee whole: ⁱ arise, and make thy 35 bed. And he arose immediately. And

all that dwelt at Lydda and ^k Saron saw him, and ^l turned to the Lord.

36 Now there was at ^m Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas. This woman was

^b ch. 3: 6, 16; 4: 10.

ⁱ Matt. 9: 6; Mark 2: 9, 11; John 5: 8-12.

^k 1 Chron. 5: 16.

^l ch.

11: 21; 1 Thess. 1: 9, 10.

^m Jonah 1: 3.

of those who received the benefits of the gospel." (HACKETT.) **Had kept his bed**—*had lain upon a pallet.* (5: 15.) **Of the palsy**—*of paralysis.* (8: 7.) The severity of the case is inferred from its long continuance, **eight years.**

34. Peter said unto him. Having a conviction and an assurance within himself that the power of the Lord would be exerted in the recovery of the paralytic. Peter addresses him by name to secure his attention and arouse his faith. He says nothing of himself, but presents **Jesus Christ** or **Jesus the Christ** as the healer. (See 3: 6.) Many authorities place the article before Christ. Westcott and Hort omit it. **Maketh thee whole**—now at this moment. **Arise, stand up, and make thy bed**—*spread for thyself, thy couch and whatever is needful.* The word *bed* is not in the original, but is implied in the thought. The command requires immediate action. "Perform immediately, in token of thy cure, the same work which hitherto others have had to do for thee." (MEYER.) Standing up showed that his feet, ankles, and lower muscles were restored to strength; spreading of the bed indicated recovered use of hands and arms. The cure and the obedience were immediate. **He arose immediately.**

35. As a result of the miracle there was a general turning to the Lord. **All** the people generally, **that dwelt at Lydda and Saron**—literally, *and the plain*, for so *Sharon* means, a beautiful and fertile plain along the coast of Palestine of some thirty miles between Joppa and Cæsarea. It was famous for its pasturage (1 Chron. 27: 29), its fertility and beauty compared with Carmel, (Isa. 35: 2; 35: 10); and Solomon in his Song of Songs (2: 1) sings of the rose of Sharon. It was emphatically *the plain of Judea*. **Saw him**—after his cure, not all at once, but from time to time as each had opportunity. *And they turned to the*

Lord—Jesus the Christ, descriptive of Jewish converts. Gentiles are spoken of as "turning to God." (11: 21; 15: 19.) The meaning of the passage is that at Lydda and in the plain adjacent to it there was a general turning to the new religion, and a general acknowledgment that Jesus was the Christ. "This is, no doubt, a reason for this one case being singled out from many of the same kind and particularly stated, not because it was intrinsically more important, but because it was connected with this progress of the truth, and with other great events about to be recorded." (ALEXANDER.)

36. Another miracle is related which brings Peter to Joppa and results in a great in-gathering there. **Joppa**, meaning *beauty*, was a city on the Mediterranean about thirty-nine miles northwest of Jerusalem, lying on the border of the tribes of Dan and Ephraim. (Josh. 19: 46.) It had a celebrated and dangerous port, but the best upon the coast, until Herod the Great made an artificial port at Cæsarea. It became the port of Jerusalem when the latter became the capital of the kingdom. It is mentioned only in this narrative in the New Testament. It is now *Yafa*, and "has no port; and the landing, when possible, is made in small boats. The appearance of the city from the water, beautifully situated upon a rounded hill, encompassed by orchards of oranges, lemons, citrons, and apricots, is attractive and animating. A wall surrounds it on the landward side, with a few old guns upon it. . . . The city is irregularly built of chalk-looking, square, flat-roofed houses, and is made up of a mixed mass of fifteen thousand people." (DR. FISH, *Bibl. Land Illustrated*, p. 137.) **Tabitha**, in Aramean and **Dorcas**, in Greek, both mean a female *gazelle*, which in the East was regarded as a standard of beauty. It was often employed as a

full of good works and alms-deeds which she did. And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died: whom when they had washed, they laid her in 38 an upper chamber. And forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they

sent unto him two men, desiring him that he would not delay to come to them. 39 Then Peter arose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and showing the coats and garments which Dorcas

■ 1 Tim. 2: 10; Titus 3: 8. ° Prov. 10: 7.

common name of females. As the Hebrew (Aramean) and Greek were both used at Joppa it is probable that both names were applied to this woman. It was also a custom of the age and country to have two names. (1: 23; 4: 36.) Unlike Eneas, she is at once introduced as a **disciple** and her benevolent disposition and beneficent deeds are mentioned. **Full of good works**—abounding in them. "The expression 'full of' is a favorite one with Luke: 'full of leprosy' (Luke 5: 12); 'full of faith' (Acts 6: 5, 8), etc." (DR. P. SCHAFF, in *International Revision Com.*) **And almsdeeds**—and in particular of deeds of mercy, gifts to the poor. (3: 2, 3.) **Which she did, was doing**; showing that this was her habit.

37. In those days—while Peter abode at Lydda. *Having sickened, she died, and, having washed or bathed her, they placed her in an upper room.* Perhaps a room on the second story, but more probably the upper room used by Orientals, in which to sup, meditate, and pray, sometimes built on the flat roof of the house. (1: 13; 2 Kings 23: 12.) It is spoken of more definitely in ver. 39, as "the upper room." It was customary among the Jews for women to wash or bathe the dead, washing the whole body. Luke uses general terms without reference to persons, employing a masculine of the participle equivalent to the indefinite "they": *they washed and laid*, etc. (WINER, *Gram. of N. T.*, p 178, and HACKETT.)

38. As Lydda was nigh to Joppa—a little over eleven miles southeast, across the plain, on the road to Jerusalem, and in sight of each other. **The disciples, etc.**—the disciples having heard that Peter was there, at Lydda. They act conjointly; the report of the healing of Eneas had reached them, and they also may have heard that Peter was still there. They

send two men **desiring**, rather *entreating* him to come to them. The whole congregation at Joppa seem to have been deeply affected with their loss, and they earnestly desire the presence of Peter for sympathy and encouragement, and perhaps with a vague hope that he would help them, and that Dorcas would be restored to them. Instead of **that he would not delay**, etc., the oldest manuscripts read, *Delay not to come to us*, which is now preferred by the best authorities. "Thou mayest not *hesitate* to come to us." (MEYER.) They feel that he cannot but grant their request. "Death, the followers of Jesus had now learned to regard with greater calmness. See Paul's reproof of immoderate grief for the dead in his earliest epistle. (1 Thess. 4: 13-18.)" (HOWSON AND SPENCE.)

39. Peter at once responds to their earnest entreaty and goes to Joppa, and is there conducted by the disciples to **the upper chamber** in which the body of Dorcas lay, where also it would be kept according to custom if the burial was delayed. **The widows** who had enjoyed her benefactions stood by him **weeping**, thus manifesting their great sorrow. What a contrast with the outward show of the professional performers, which Jesus rebuked at the raising of Jairus' daughter. (Matt. 9: 22, 23; Mark 5: 39.) Thus it behooved a Christian company. **Showing the coats**—rather, *showing tunics and mantles* (without the article), these being specimens of her works and gifts. The tunics were undergarments worn next to the skin and extending to the knees. The mantles were outer garments, or cloaks, which were also used as a covering by night. (See *Notes on Matthew*, 5: 40.) **All which Dorcas made**—which she was accustomed to make when alive. Her gifts were the work of her own hands, and so much the more precious. They were memor-

40 made while she was with them. But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning *him* to the body *usad*, *Tabitha, arise*. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, 41 she sat up. And he gave her *his* hand,

and lifted her up: and when he had called the saints and widows, [he] presented her 42 alive. And it was known throughout all Joppa; and many believed in the Lord. 43 And it came to pass, that he tarried many days in Joppa with one *Simon a tanner*

¶ 1 Kings 17: 19-23; 2 Kings 4: 32-36; Matt. 9: 25. 4 Mark 5: 41, 42; John 11: 43. * John 11: 45; 12: 11. * ch. 10: 6.

ials of her devotion to her charitable work. She is fittingly called Dorcas in a Greek narrative, and this indicates that she was known by both her Hebrew and her Greek name.

40. But Peter put them all forth—not violently, but constrained them to retire. How natural to imitate his Saviour (Mark 5: 40), and whose example could he better follow? (John 10: 4.) Like Elijah (1 Kings 17: 19, 20), and Elisha (2 Kings 4: 33), he would be alone with God in prayer. (Matt. 6: 6.) He could unburden his soul only in secret; none but the divine ear must hear the pleading and agony. Having obtained assurance of answered prayer, and that the power of the Lord Jesus was about to be exerted through him, Peter turned to the dead body, and in faith uttered the command, **Tabitha, arise—rise, stand up!** It was natural that Peter, being a Jew, should use her Aramean name, that being the colloquial language of the country. Peter speaks to the body, as to a living person, being assured of returning life, with expectation of being obeyed. Notice the process of obedience: first she **opened her eyes**, an evidence of restored life, then seeing Peter, **she sat up**—then Peter gives her his helping hand of welcome and congratulation and raises her up. (Next verse.) With what truthful simplicity and how graphically is the scene described!

41. Gave her his hand—"Implying that she took it and was not altogether passive." (ALEXANDER.) **He lifted**—rather, *raised her up*; courteously helped her to her feet, in order that he might present her to her friends, not a dead body as she was just before, but *living*, having all the active signs of life. Notice the two terms, **saints and widows**, probably indicating that some of the widows were not professed disciples.

42. Luke records the effect of the

miracle: **It was known**—rather, *it became known*—the tidings spread through the whole city—that the well-known Dorcas, who had been sick, had died and remained dead for a time till Peter came, and that in the name of Jesus Christ he had raised her to life. So undeniable were these facts and so deeply did they impress the people **that many believed in**—rather, **on the Lord Jesus** (ver. 35), as the ground of their faith, whose Messiahship had been thus signally attested. "A wonder when we look at Peter, the human instrument, but no wonder at all when we think of Jesus Christ, the Divine Agent. It is divine power that works in daily order, and divine choice can alter that order in an individual instance. Hence, let but the Deity of Jesus Christ be granted and the whole matter is explained." (DR. W. M. TAYLOR.)

43. Luke shows both how Peter came to Joppa and how he was there when Cornelius sent for him. (10: 5.) When he first came there on an errand of mercy he doubtless expected a short stay, but the wonderful miracle wrought through him, the reception of the gospel by the people and the opportunity afforded for preaching in a large seaport town, with other reasons unknown to us, led him to remain **many days**—a note of time applied to a period ranging from a few weeks to three years. (See on ver. 27.) It would seem upon coming to Joppa that he was entertained by the disciples. But after a little when he determined to remain for a considerable time he lodged with **one Simon, a tanner**. (10: 6.) This Simon was probably a disciple, either a previous or recent convert. He may have had some possessions, so that Peter enjoyed his hospitality. He is only mentioned in this and the next chapter. His house was by the seaside. Its traditional

site is still pointed out. (See on 10: 6.) His occupation was in ill-repute among ancient nations, especially the Jews. The latter considered concealment of it before marriage, or entering into it after marriage a ground of divorce and forbade any tanner becoming high priest or king. Tanners were required to live, or at least carry on their business outside the city. Their houses were considered by Rabbinical Jews like those of the heathen. The residence of Peter with Simon seems to indicate that Peter was less scrupulous than most Jews and perhaps also that the disciples were held in slight esteem in Joppa. The minuteness of the narrative also should be noted, showing the painstaking carefulness of Luke.

PRACTICAL REMARKS.

1. As a briar in the flesh, so the life and words of Stephen festered in the heart of Saul. (Ver. 1; 6: 10; 7: 58; 8: 1, 3.)

2. In Saul we have an illustration of the influence of hatred, prejudice, and ignorant zeal for God, in a man of learning and superior ability. (Ver. 2; Rom. 10: 2; 1 Tim. 1: 13.)

3. God often permits the wicked to carry on their designs even to the verge of accomplishment, when he suddenly stops them in judgment or mercy. (Ver. 3; 12: 23.)

4. Christ and his people are one; and what is done to them is done to him. (Ver. 4; John 15: 5; Heb. 2: 11; 1 Sam. 25: 29; Zach. 2: 8.)

5. No one can resist God and his own conscience and be happy. (Ver. 5; 26: 14; Prov. 13: 15.)

6. They shall be taught their duty, who sincerely ask it of the Lord, and wait patiently and prayerfully for instruction. (Ver. 6; 10: 4, 5; James 1: 5.)

7. It is not enough to hear the gospel with the ear, it must be understood and received into the heart. (Ver. 7; 28: 26, 27.)

8. God sometimes deviates from the ordinary means of grace, but not ignoring them, in the conversion of men. Thus he used miraculous means to awaken and convict Saul; but his yielding to Christ was his own personal act, and he was brought fully to the light by the instruction of Ananias. (Ver. 8-17; Rom. 10: 12-14.)

9. Christ may delay to manifest himself to some longer than to others. This is not necessarily a proof of unanswered prayer. (Ver. 9; Dan. 9: 23.)

10. It is not so much distinguished ability as faithfulness that the Lord blesses in the ministry. Not an apostle, but an obscure "disciple" must minister to Saul. The learned Pharisee must sit at the feet of an unlearned Christian. (Ver. 10-17; 1 Cor. 4: 2.)

11. True prayer is a mark of a true convert. A spirit of devotion cannot reside with a spirit of pride, hypocrisy, injustice, and cruelty. (Ver. 11; Luke 18: 13.)

12. The most precious revelations are to the soul alone with God. Thus it pleased God "to reveal his Son" in Saul, as the Messiah and Saviour. (Ver. 12; 22: 17; Gal. 1: 16; 2 Cor. 12: 2 f.)

13. When Christ commands no apprehension of danger should interfere with obedience. (Ver. 13-16; Matt. 10: 28.)

14. The early disciples recognized the divinity of Jesus Christ, in calling on his name. (Ver. 14; 1: 24; 7: 59.)

15. Behold God's sovereignty and the wonders of his grace in the conversion and apostleship of Saul! "How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways are past finding out." (Ver. 15; Rom. 11: 33-36.)

16. Trials and sufferings often correspond with the abundance of grace given. (Ver. 16; Deut. 33: 23; 2 Cor. 12: 9.)

17. Both Jesus and the Holy Spirit honor the ministry of the word. (Ver. 17; 10: 36, 41.)

18. Baptism should be administered promptly to those prepared to receive it. (Ver. 18; 2: 44; 8: 12, 36-38.)

19. The conversion of Saul is a strong evidence to the truth of Christianity. He could not have been an impostor; but while impostors seek selfish ends, Saul's after-life was a striking example of unselfishness and sacrifice. Neither could he have been mad, or a fanatic, for his writings and his after-life show that he was not visionary and given to change, but a man of learning, sound judgment, strong intellectual powers, steady principle, and strict integrity. What he says therefore demands credence. What he saw and experienced we must accept as realities. No other explanation than that he saw Jesus, the Son of God, and experienced the power

of the gospel, can account for so great and sudden a change. And Saul's example is pre-eminent, but not alone. Hundreds and thousands of enemies and persecutors have been changed, and have become living witnesses to the power and truth of the Christian religion. (Ver. 3-20; 23 : 1; 26 : 25; 2 Tim. 2 : 12.)

20. Such a conversion evidently requires divine interposition. The furious Saul was not in a condition to listen to argument, or impartially investigate the subject. The sudden conversion of such a man needed the miraculous means described in this chapter. (Ver. 3-20; 1 Tim. 12 : 16.)

21. He who has found Christ will desire to honor him and speak of him to others. (Ver. 23, 24.)

22. Growth in grace and usefulness generally go together. (Ver. 22; Matt. 13 : 12.)

23. A retributive Providence sometimes permits persecutors in becoming Christians to taste the bitterness of the cup they had mixed for others. (Ver. 23, 24.)

24. We must not expect extraordinary aid from God, when means within our reach will accomplish our purpose. (Ver. 24.)

25. Christ does not require us to sacrifice our lives, except when we cannot avoid it without renouncing him and his cause. (Ver. 25.)

26. Christians are often reminded of their former sinful lives. Such reminders may be painful and humiliating, yet salutary. (Ver. 26; Isa. 51 : 1.)

27. A Christian brother may prove to another who is under suspicion, a true Barnabas, "a son of consolation." (Ver. 27; Philem. 10-16.)

28. The Christian should manifest his conversion in word and deed, in the church and in the world. (Ver. 28, 29; Matt. 5 : 16.)

29. It becomes the good soldier of Jesus Christ to serve faithfully, endure patiently, and retire from posts of labor obediently. (Ver. 29, 30; 22 : 21; 2 Kings 2 : 3.)

30. Times of peace should be used in active work and diligent preparation for new conquests in Christ's kingdom. (Ver. 31; 6 : 7.)

31. Churches need pastoral watchcare in times of peace as well as in seasons of conflict. (Ver. 31, 32; 1 Peter 5 : 8.)

32. Seasons of tranquillity should be improved by pastors in looking after everything

connected with their work. (Ver. 32; 1 Peter 5 : 2, 3.)

33. Whoever lives for Jesus Christ, consecrating himself to him, is a saint. (Ver. 32; 1 Cor. 1 : 2.)

34. Miracles confirmed the authority of the apostles, and contributed to the success of the gospel. (Ver. 33, 35, 42; 13 : 9-11.)

35. We are to pray for the sick, looking for God's blessing, and restoration if it is God's will. (Ver. 34; James 5 : 14, 15.)

36. Christianity has elevated woman and given her a prominent place in the beneficent work of the church from its beginning. (Ver. 36, 39; 16 : 15; 18 : 25; Phil. 4 : 3.)

37. Good works and labors of love are a great blessing to others, but do not protect from death and sickness. (Ver. 37-39.)

38. The death of saints often reveals their work more than their lives. (Ver. 39; Rev. 14 : 13.)

39. Our aim should be not only to save the soul, but also to benefit the body; to make men good here as well as happy hereafter. (Ver. 34, 40; Titus 2 : 11-14.)

40. Great blessings are to be obtained through private prayer. (Ver. 40; Mark 9 : 29.)

41. When the Lord opens a door of usefulness to a pastor he should remain and take advantage of it. (Ver. 42, 43; 18 : 11.)

42. The house of Simon the tanner may have been despised among the Jews, but it was regarded by the Lord and by angels in heaven. (Ver. 43; 10 : 6 f.)

Ch. 10 : This chapter and the two that follow cover the period of transition of the gospel to the heathen. A new era opens. Converted Gentiles are received into the church without passing through Judaism. This chapter is devoted to the conversion and baptism of the uncircumcised.

1-22. CORNELIUS, DIVINELY DIRECTED, SENDS FOR PETER, WHO IS LIKEWISE DIRECTED TO GO TO HIM. The conversion of Cornelius forms a connecting link between Jewish and Gentile Christianity, between Jerusalem and Antioch. Its importance may be inferred from the prominence given it in the Acts, and from the fact that the visions of Cornelius and Peter are related twice (ver. 30-33; 11 : 4-12), as well as the conversion of Cornelius and his

Cornelius is directed by an angel to send for Peter. Peter's vision.

10. THERE was a certain man in Caesarea

called Cornelius, a centurion of the band
2 called the Italian band, a devout man,
and one that feared God with all his

^t ch. 8 : 2 ; 22 : 12.

^u ver. 35 ; Gen. 18 : 19.

company. (Ver. 23-48 ; 11 : 12-17.) The time is uncertain, but probably about A. D. 38 or 39. The gospel had been fully preached to the Jews in Jerusalem and throughout Palestine. The time had come for it to be proclaimed to those who were "aliens to the commonwealth of Israel." To execute this, extraordinary measures were adopted, and a new revelation given to Peter, who was to open the door of the kingdom to the Gentiles.

1. There was a certain man, etc. *A certain man* is the subject of *saw* in ver. 3. The narrative is closely connected with the last chapter. It was while Peter was with Simon the tanner that this conversion occurred. (10 : 43.) During the seven to ten years since the resurrection of our Lord a preparation had been going on for preaching the gospel to the Gentiles. The conversion of proselytes (2 : 10 ; 6 : 5), of the half-heathen and hated Samaritans (8 : 5-8), of the eunuch (8 : 39), of Saul of Tarsus, his call to the apostleship, and the intimations of his Gentile work (9 : 15 ; 22 : 21), the deeper views and the spiritual preaching of Stephen (6 : 10 ; 7 : 4-53), and the contact more or less of the disciples and especially of Peter with the Gentiles throughout Palestine in their preaching to the Jews (8 : 4 ; 9 : 32),—were all steps preparatory to preaching the gospel to the uncircumcised. This event was very naturally followed by Saul preaching to Gentiles as well as Jews in Cilicia, the gathering of churches (15 : 23, 43), and the conversion of Gentiles at Antioch. (11 : 20, 21.) The conversion of Cornelius and his company may thus be said to have been in the very nick of time. (See Author's *Harmonic Arrangement*, note on § 19.)

Caesarea. (See on 8 : 40.) It was a fitting place for the first Gentile converts. It was in some respects the most important city of Palestine, being at that time the Roman capital of the country. Here was Herod's palace (23 : 35), the residence of the Herods and

the Roman governors, and the headquarters of the troops that kept the land in subjection. It was the most largely Gentile city in Palestine. Through it ran the great Roman road along the coast. It had the finest harbor of that whole region, likened by Josephus to that of the Piræus at Athens ; and from it could go forth ships to all parts of Europe, Asia, and Africa, along the Mediterranean coast. (27 : 1.) Compare Josephus, *Antiq.* xv. 9 : 6.

Cornelius was the name of a large Roman clan, with which were connected several noble and distinguished families. The officer here spoken of had the great honor of belonging to the **Italian band**, or *cohort*, answering to our regiment, consisting of troops raised in Italy, rather than of those raised from the nations of Palestine. An old inscription mentions "a cohort of Italian volunteers" who served in Syria, which some regard as identical with this one. It was fitting and important that the governor should have a body of faithful troops on whom he could rely. Cornelius was a **centurion**, strictly a commander of a hundred men, though the title was also applied with some latitude to those who led a larger or a smaller number.

2. Cornelius not only bore a distinguished name and held an honorable position, but he also had a sterling character, and a good reputation. He was a **devout man, one that feared God**—exercising a genuine and devout reverence of the true God, implying an obedient state of mind and a willing allegiance to God. (Luke 1 : 50 ; 18 : 2 ; Rev. 19 : 5.) His religion was so sincere and real that it had efficaciously influenced **all his house**—his kinsmen and near friends. (Ver. 24.) He also showed his tender and loving spirit by giving **much alms to the people**—to Gentiles indeed, but especially to the Jews, for he was "of good report among all the nations of the Jews." (Ver. 22.) He was not like many Roman officials

house; which gave much alms to the 3 people, and prayed to God always. } He

saw in a vision evidently, about the ninth hour of the day, an angel of God

† Luke 18 : 1; Rom. 12 : 12. } ver. 30; ch. 11 : 13.

who oppressed and plundered the people of the provinces. We are reminded of the centurion who came to Jesus, to whom the Jews bore testimony, "He loveth our nation and hath built us a synagogue." (Luke 7 : 5.) Compare also the centurion at the crucifixion, who confessed, "Truly this man was the Son of God." (Mark 15 : 39; Luke 23 : 47.) **Prayed to God always**—habitual in his devotions, in spirit and in act, for general blessings and for particular guidance. Such a man with such a position, such a character, and such deeds, must have been a favorite, and influential both with Jews and Gentiles. Such was the first Gentile convert. While God often calls his people from among the poor and lowly (1 Cor. 1 : 26-28), he also calls from the more influential. Thus the Apostle John (John 18 : 15), Saul of Tarsus (22 : 3), and Cornelius. From this account it appears that Cornelius had become dissatisfied with his pagan religion and had renounced idolatry, and through divine grace had become a true worshiper of the only and true God. He had been thus prepared to receive Jesus, the Messiah, as soon as clearly presented to him. He was in some respects in a condition similar to the pious Jew in Old Testament times, and to those who were "waiting for the consolation of Israel." We must not, however, regard him as a proselyte, not even of the gate, for the whole narrative implies that, legally and socially, he was to be regarded as a heathen. (Ver. 28 : 11 : 13 : 15 : 7.) The language of this verse, though applicable to proselytes, is not a technical description of one. Yet some able expositors have supposed him a proselyte of the gate. "But this is at variance with ver. 28, 34, 35; 11 : 1, 18; 15 : 17, where he is simply put into the class of the Gentiles,—a circumstance which cannot be referred merely to the want of circumcision, as the proselytes of the gate also belonged to the communion of the theocracy, and had ceased to be non-Jews like absolute foreigners. And all the great importance which this event has in a

connected view of the books of the Acts, has as its basis the very circumstance that Cornelius was a *Gentile*." (MEYER.)

3. According to the best critical authorities the first three verses make one long sentence, **saw** agreeing with *man* in ver. 1: *A certain man . . . devout and fearing God . . . saw.* **In a vision**—a sight while awake and engaged in prayer. (Ver. 30. See on 9 : 10.) **Evidently**—that is, he saw *distinctly in a vision*, which was addressed, not merely to the mind, but to the senses. **About the ninth hour**—three o'clock in the afternoon, being one of the Jewish hours of prayer. (3 : 1.) The fact that Cornelius was praying at that time (ver. 30) shows that he had adopted some of the Jewish regulations of prayer. His contact with the Jewish people doubtless had something to do with his religious views and practices. He had probably seen and read somewhat the Jewish Scriptures as translated in the Septuagint. That he was not Pharisaic in his notions, nor a moralist, trusting in his morality, is evident from the fact that he accepted the Saviour as soon as presented. He appears to have been conscious that he was a sinner, and he had a longing for something which he had not attained. (11 : 14.) He had heard of a person called Jesus (ver. 37), and perhaps Philip was now at Caesarea, or had been there (8 : 40), having but small success among some obscure persons of the comparatively small Jewish population of that city. But Cornelius had no clear view of Jesus and the Messiah. He may have known something of Hebrew prophecies regarding a promised One, but like the eunuch may have been in doubt and confused about their meaning. (8 : 31, 34.) The burden of his prayer very probably was in this direction, seeking light and an assurance of salvation and acceptance with God. (Ver. 22.) Under such circumstances how fitting the vision and assurance of answered prayer. (Ver. 4.) **An angel of God**—one appearing in

coming unto him, and saying unto him,
 4 Cornelius. And when he looked on him,
 he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord?
 And he said unto him, Thy prayers and
 thine alms ^a are come up ^a for a memorial
 5 before God. And now send men to Joppa,

and call for *one* ^b Simon, whose surname
 6 is Peter; he lodgeth with one ^c Simon a
 tanner, whose house is by the sea side:
^d he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to
 do.

^a Rev. 8 : 4.

^a ver. 31.

^b Mark 3 : 16.

^c ch. 9 : 43.

^d ch. 11 : 14.

human form (ver. 30), **coming to him** in the very place where he was praying and addressing him by name, as in the cases of Samuel (1 Sam. 3 : 10), and Saul. (9 : 4.) An angelic appearance would have not only an assuring effect on Cornelius, but also great weight with Peter (ver. 22) and the apostles and brethren at Jerusalem. (11 : 1, 13.)

4. When Cornelius fixed his eyes upon the heavenly messenger in bright apparel (ver. 30) he was awe-struck and fearful. He addressed him as **Lord**, not in worship, but in reverence, as to one perhaps from the unseen world. **What is it?** What hast thou to say, and what is the occasion of thy coming? **Thy prayers and thine alms**—the two kinds of worship and service mentioned in ver. 2, both of which Cornelius had acceptably offered. **Have come up**, like the smoke and the vapor from ancient sacrifices. (Lev. 2, 9, 16; 5 : 12.) **For a memorial**—a reminder of God, as it were, of what Cornelius desired and needed. **Before God**—in heaven. (Heb. 13 : 16.) His prayers had been heard; God remembered them, and was about to help him. All this would indicate that Cornelius was a true worshiper, and accepted through that infinite grace in Christ, which was about to be made known to him through the preaching of Peter and the descent of the Spirit. "Intrinsic merit or efficacy is no more ascribed in these words to the good works of Cornelius than to the oblations from which the figure or comparison is taken." (ALEXANDER.)

5. Having received assurance of divine favor, Cornelius is directed as to what to do. **Send men to Joppa**—about thirty miles south of Caesarea. (See on 9 : 34.) **Call for, or fetch one Simon, whose surname is Peter.** *One, or a certain Simon* is now accepted as the true reading. Both the name and the place of abode (ver. 6)

are minutely described so as to prevent mistake. Notice also that the exact phrase, descriptive of Peter, is mentioned four times. (Ver. 18, 32; 11 : 13.) Compare our Lord's naming of Peter. (John 1 : 42; Matt. 16 : 18, 19.) Cornelius must be brought to the knowledge of Christ, not by an angel, but by a man. But why did not the angel direct him to Philip, who was probably then at Caesarea? (8 : 40; 21 : 8.) Because the apostles were the organizers of the Christian church, and to Peter had been given "the keys of the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 16 : 18, on which see Author's note), the power of admitting (11 : 17) or denying admission. (8 : 21.) Thus in the exercise of this authority as the leader on the day of Pentecost he opened, as it were, the door of the kingdom to the Jews, and now he is about to open it to the Gentile world. (15 : 7.) Having accomplished this his work was done, so far as the Gentiles were concerned, for he was an apostle to the circumcision. (Gal. 2 : 7, 8.) Paul was chosen to carry on that work as the apostle of the uncircumcision.

6. **With one, or a certain Simon, a tanner**, with whom Peter was boarding, or perhaps whose hospitality he was enjoying. (See on 9 : 13.) **Whose house is by the seaside**—the Mediterranean. The seaside was convenient for his occupation and for trade. It may have been outside of the city, on account of the ceremonial uncleanness of his employment. The Jewish oral law required that sepulchres and tan-yards be at least fifty cubits from the city. "The only antiquity to detain the traveler a single hour [in Joppa] is the traditional house of Simon. Like all Eastern dwellings, it is constructed of stone, square in form, with a flat roof, and may have stood for centuries, as, without violence, it will endure for hundreds of years to come. Standing near the seaside, both its lo-

7 And when the angel which spake unto Cornelius was departed, he called two of his household servants, and a devout sol-

dier of them that waited on him continually; and when he had declared all these things unto them, he sent them to Joppa.

cation and the structure of the building are in harmony with the inspired narrative, and a venerable tradition points to it as once the residence of a tanner. The entrance is through a low gallery, before which the servants of Cornelius stood inquiring for Peter. Within a small court-yard, containing a well of excellent water, and from the court a stone staircase leads to the roof, from which I enjoyed a commanding view of the sea, over whose blue waters had glanced the apostolic eye as Peter sat beneath those clear expanded heavens from which descended the symbolic sheet, opening to his Jewish understanding the purposes of the divine mind." (DR. J. P. NEWMAN, *From Dan to Beersheba*, p. 275.) Simon's tannery may have been some distance from his dwelling. **He shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.** These words are not found in the oldest manuscripts and versions and are omitted by the highest critical authorities. They express the object of the mission to Peter (ver. 22), which is clearly expressed in 11 : 14, and show that the great desire of Cornelius was to know the way of salvation, and his own personal interest in it.

7. Cornelius put the command of the angel into immediate execution. On that very day, though so far advanced, he sent away three messengers to Joppa. (Ver. 9, 33.) **Two of his household servants**—domestics of his household, who, belonging to his house, feared God. (Ver. 2.) **A devout soldier** from his personal attendants, also a man of piety. (Ver. 2.) He chooses men of kindred spirit to go for him on so important a mission.

8. **When he had declared**, or fully related **all things** that he had seen and that had been commanded him. This would also indicate that these men were of kindred religious feelings, to whom such an embassy could be entrusted. His sending messengers at once was an evidence of his faith, and his recounting the vision to them was adapted to arouse their ex-

pectation, and prepare them for the confirmation of their faith.

9. Peter is prepared for the coming of the centurion's messengers by a vision. He had been passing through an experience as well as Cornelius. Doubtless the conversion of the Gentiles had often been in his thought. Jesus had taught that the blessings of his kingdom would be world-wide. (Matt. 8 : 11, 12 ; 13 : 38), and in his last commission had commanded his disciples to teach, or disciple, all nations, preaching the gospel to every creature (Matt. 28 : 19 ; Mark 16 : 15), and had told them that they should be his witnesses even to the utmost parts of the earth. (1 : 8.) The ancient prophecies also had foretold the conversion of the Gentiles, which Peter in his discourses had quoted. (Ch. 17 : 3, 25.) But how was this to be accomplished. Peter with the first disciples generally appear to have expected that Gentiles would first become proselytes to Judaism, and then converts to Christianity. Even after the conversion of Cornelius some still held to at least a similar view, maintaining that Gentiles must be circumcised. (15 : 1.) Peter must have had many thoughts on this subject and probably underwent some modification of views. The advanced views and preaching of Stephen, the conversion of the half-heathen Samaritans, and the Holy Spirit coming upon them, the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, and what he heard from his own lips during his visit at Jerusalem (9 : 28 ; 22 : 21 ; Gal. 1 : 18), must all have made a deep impression on him. His visits throughout Palestine brought him into certain contact with Gentiles, and naturally would arouse his solicitude for them. And his residence with Simon the tanner, who was regarded by the Jews as ceremonially unclean, indicates that Judaism was loosening its hold upon him. Under all these influences Peter might well wonder whether he fully understood God's method of reaching the Gentiles.

On the morrow. The messengers of Cornelius, setting out late in the

9 On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour. And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a

11 trance, and saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping

* ch. 11: 5, etc.; Matt. 6: 5, 6.

† Num. 24: 4; Ezek. 8: 1-3; 2 Cor. 12: 2-4; Rev. 1: 10. ‡ ch. 7: 56; Rev. 19: 11.

day and traveling somewhat by night, according to the custom of the country (Luke 11: 5, 6), would reach Joppa about the middle of the next day. While they are approaching the city, **Peter went up upon the housetop to pray.** The roofs of the houses of the Orientals being flat and surrounded with a balustrade three or four feet high, were frequented, not only for walking, but also for meditation and prayer. (Zeph. 1: 5; Deut. 22: 8; 2 Kings 23: 12; Jer. 19: 13; Luke 5: 19.) "At Jaffa, the ancient Joppa, I observed houses furnished with a wall about the roof, within which a person could sit or kneel, without any exposure to the view of others, whether on the adjacent houses or in the streets. At Jerusalem I entered the house of a Jew early one morning and found a member of the family sitting secluded and alone on one of the lower roofs engaged in reading the Scriptures and offering his prayers." (DR. HACKETT, *Illustrations of Scripture*, p. 81.) This was a fitting place for Peter to obey his Lord's command regarding secret prayer. (Matt 6: 6.) It was about the sixth hour, about noon, one of the stated Jewish seasons for prayer. We may easily believe that one burden of Peter's prayer was the conversion of the Gentile world. He had seen how slow was the progress of the gospel among the heathen, and how comparatively few of them embraced Judaism. He could well cry out, "O Lord, how long?" As he looked out from that housetop upon the Mediterranean, whose waters washed three continents, and thought of the millions who, according to prophecy, were to be blessed in the Messiah, his prayers would naturally go out in their behalf. As he recalled how Jonah went forth from this very port and preached successfully to the Ninevites (Jonah 3: 4, 5), he might well crave like success.

10. While thus engaged in medita-

tion and prayer he became very hungry and desired to eat, or *taste of food*, a condition preparatory to the vision that ensued. In his defence at Jerusalem Peter did not refer to this, but he distinctly says that he was praying. (11: 5.) But while the people of the house were preparing dinner Peter fell into a trance, an *ecstasy* or a *rapture came upon him*, whereby he was transported as it were out of himself, and losing consciousness of outer objects, although awake, he sees in his mind, as with his bodily eyes and ears, things shown him by God. The trance is mentioned only three times in the New Testament, here in 11: 5 and 22: 17. (See on 9: 10.) The experience was similar to that of John on Patmos when "in the spirit." (Rev. 1: 10; 4: 1, 2.) He saw visions picturing forth things to come. (See 2 Cor. 12: 2.)

11. Saw heaven opened. The language is very vivid as if the scene were present. A certain vessel—a canvas, so shaped and suspended by its four corners, that it appeared like a vessel. It was like a great linen sheet tied at its four corners with cords reaching into the heavens above. It was descending from heaven, suggesting that all things had their origin in God, and are cleansed by him. (Ver. 15; Gen. 1: 25.) Many of the oldest manuscripts omit *knit*, and read *let down by its four corners*. The great sheet naturally represents the wide world, and the four corners the four parts of the earth, the north, the south, the east, and the west, from which men should come into the kingdom of God. (Matt. 8: 11.)

12. The contents were as surprising to Peter with his Jewish ideas as the vessel itself. All manner of four-footed beasts, etc.—embracing both the clean and the unclean. (Lev. 11: 14.) The whole creation of living land animals seemed before Peter's mind. Fishes are not included, and wild beasts

13 things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord; ^b for

I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What

^b Lev. 20 : 25, 26; Dent. 14 : 3, 7; Ezek. 4 : 14. 3 : 28; 1 Tim. 4 : 3-5; Titus 1 : 15.

ⁱ ver. 28; ch. 15 : 9; Rom. 14 : 14, 17, 20; Gal.

are wanting in the best manuscripts, but are found in 11 : 6.

13. More surprising still to Peter was the command: **Rise, Peter,**—perhaps he was kneeling or prostrate in prayer,—**kill and eat**, any of these animals clean and unclean. All lines of ceremonial uncleanness are ignored. The word *kill*, in the original, is the verb used for slaying for sacrifice (14 : 13, 18), though not limited to that use. (Luke 15 : 23, 27, 30.) The vision, however, is shaped to Peter's bodily condition of extreme hunger. This was the first thing, even though the sacrificial use of these animals be suggested. With this understanding we can with Alexander refer the command "not merely to the satisfaction of the appetite, but to those ceremonial restrictions, under which the law of Moses placed the Jews, both in their worship and in their daily use of their necessary food. As if the voice had said, 'From among these animals select thy offerings or thy food without regard to the distinction of clean and unclean.' " **There came a voice** (see 11 : 7)—which indicates an audible voice.

14. Peter shrinks back from a command so repugnant to his Jewish ideas and feelings. Notwithstanding his extreme hunger and the clean animals mingled with the unclean, yet the presence of the unclean seemed to defile the whole sheet. **Not so**—by no means, this must not be. **Lord** is a reverential title addressed to the unknown author of the voice. (See on 9 : 5.) It was just like Peter, who, when Jesus foretold his sufferings, exclaimed, "Be it far from thee, Lord" (Matt. 16 : 22), and at the washing of the disciples' feet, he declared, "Thou shalt never wash my feet." (John 13 : 8.) Peter, too, may have regarded this as a test in respect to the law. Having always lived as a strict Jew, he adds, *I never ate anything common or unclean*. The highest critical authorities prefer *and* instead of *or*. **Common**—that which

is profane, unhallowed, not set apart or consecrated according to the Levitical law. (Ex. k. 42 : 20.) To fill out his idea of the profane and unholy Peter adds, *and unclean*. The separation between Jews and Gentiles was effected, not only by circumcision, but also by their laws respecting meats. (Lev. 20 : 24-26.) Nothing was more repulsive to a Hebrew than to eat unclean meats. In 2 Maccabees 6 : 18; 7 : 1, it is related that certain Jews submitted to death rather than eat swine's flesh. The stricter Jews, at this day, to avoid all unclean meats, purchase only of their own butchers. The distinction between clean and unclean animals dates back to before the flood (Gen. 7 : 2); and was recognized in the laws of heathen nations as well as in those of the Jews. The Gentile laws, however, had reference rather to the priestly classes, while the Jewish law applied to all the people. The discrimination probably originated with reference to sacrifices, and then afterwards was applied to food.

15. A fact and a principle are now stated. The Old Testament distinction between the clean and unclean is abolished. All things are clean to those who receive them in faith and thanksgiving. (1 Tim. 4 : 4, 5; Rom. 14 : 14-17; 1 Cor. 10 : 25, 26.) And redemption extends alike to men without distinction of race or nation. (Col. 3 : 11; 1 : 20.) **And the voice**, etc. Rather, *And a voice again*, the speaker being unseen, *a second time came to him*. The minuteness and vividness of the narrative reminds us of Mark's Gospel, written under the direction of Peter. **What God hath cleansed**—more exactly, *What God cleansed*, declared to be clean, symbolically by their descending from heaven and the command to slay and eat. "For only what is clean is let down from heaven. Peter continued to remember well this verb. (15 : 9.)" (BENGEL.) **Thou**—in contrast to God. *Make not thou*, who art infinitely less than God,

God hath cleansed, *that call not thou com-*
 16 *mon.* This was done thrice; and the ves-
 sel was received up again into heaven.

17 Now while Peter doubted in himself
 what this vision which he had seen should
 mean, behold, the men which were sent
 from Cornelius had made inquiry for
 Simon's house, and stood before the gate,

18 and called, and asked whether Simon,
 which was surnamed Peter, were lodged
 there.

19 While Peter thought on the vision,
 * the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three
 20 men seek thee. ¹ Arise therefore, and get
 thee down, and go with them, doubting
 nothing: for I have sent them.

* ch. 11 : 12; Isa. 30 : 21; John 16 : 13. ¹ ch. 15 : 7.

common, unhallowed and unclean. How Peter must have remembered the words of Jesus, "There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him" (Mark 7 : 15); and may we not see the impress of Peter in Mark 7 : 19, Revised Version, "This he said, making all meats clean." Thus as our Lord's visit to Sychar (John 4 : 5 f.) was preparatory to the preaching of Philip in Samaria, so our Lord's discourse on defiled hands was paving the way for the fuller revelation to Peter at Joppa. Here also we see one of the contacts of the Acts with the Gospels. It was very probably in Peter's house at Capernaum where Jesus explained his words to the disciples (Mark 7 : 17); and it was Peter himself who asked the explanation. (Matt. 15 : 15.) Other contacts with the Gospels in this account of Cornelius may be seen in ver. 38; 11 : 16. (See also Luke 11 : 41, and note.)

16. This was done thrice. The words were spoken three times, to render the communication more emphatic, and to impress Peter that what he had seen was a divine reality. **Again**—or *immediately*, according to the oldest and best manuscripts: *And immediately the vessel was received up into heaven*, in contrast to its gradual and slow descent. (Ver. 11.) The object of all this was symbolically to show that the distinction hitherto existing between Jews and Gentiles was to cease, and that Christianity was for all men. (Ver. 34, 35.) And so Jew and Gentile are to compose that host, whose robes are made white in the blood of the lamb. (Rev. 7 : 14.)

17. While Peter doubted, was perplexed, and at a loss to know what the vision might signify. How the matter was growing in his mind is told in ver. 19. He was no longer in a raptured state, but had come to himself and was pondering the new revelation that

was gleaming in his soul. Its full meaning, its design and its application, was but dimly seen; but at once must have been suggested to his mind, when he heard that messengers from Cornelius were at his door. Notice how the Lord had arranged the time of corresponding incidents. While the messengers were drawing nigh the city the trance of Peter began (ver. 9), and now while perplexed about its meaning the messengers are at the gate inquiring for him. **The gate** was the porch or entrance to the open courtyard around which Jewish houses were generally built. (See on ver. 6.)

18. And called—a substitute for knocking. They call to the porter, or to any one who might have charge of the gate. **Asked**, or *were asking*, while Peter was in a state of perplexity. (Ver. 17.) **Whether Simon**, etc. (See on ver. 5.)

19. While Peter thought on—was earnestly considering the vision—revolving carefully all the things he had seen and heard, and trying to learn the lesson intended, and doubtless praying for guidance, the Holy Spirit informs him of the messengers from Cornelius and directs him to go with them. **Behold three men**, etc. This was doubtless the first intimation that Peter had of their presence. Several important manuscripts omit *three*. Its place in 11 : 11 is, however, undisputed.

20. Both Cornelius and Peter must each do his part, and thereby they show their faith. Get thee down. Two stairs usually conducted from the roof of Oriental houses, one inside the house, the other external to the street. Peter would probably descend the latter and meet the men at the gate. **Nothing doubting**—without any hesitation as to whether it be lawful or not. **For I have sent them**—the Holy Spirit through the angels and

21 Then Peter went down to the men which were sent unto him from Cornelius; and said, Behold, I am he whom ye seek: what is the cause wherefore ye are
22 come? And they said, ^m Cornelius the centurion, a just man, and one that fear-

eth God, and ⁿ of good report among all the nation of the Jews, was warned from God by an holy angel to send for thee into his house, and to hear words of thee.
23 Then called he them in, and lodged them.

^m ver. 1, 2, etc.

ⁿ ch. 22 : 12.

Cornelius. Cornelius was under the power of the Spirit when he saw the vision, and through his influence he sent the messengers. The Holy Spirit is honored throughout the Acts, and his personal directing is frequently recognized. (See 8 : 20 ; 13 : 2 ; 16 : 6, 7.) Peter himself makes special mention of this command of the Spirit in his defense at Jerusalem. (11 : 12.)

21. Then Peter went down to the men—heartily obedient to the command of the Spirit, and eager to know from these rapidly occurring incidents the mind of the Lord, and the full meaning of the vision. The words, **Which were sent unto him from Cornelius**, are wanting in the best manuscripts. Peter had learned a preparatory object lesson from the trance, and also that the Spirit had sent the men, but he was entirely ignorant of all the rest. Hence he at once declares to the messengers, **I am he whom ye seek**, and asks the **cause** of their coming. His manner and his words must have had an assuring effect upon them.

22. Cornelius the, rather a, centurion, there being many such in Palestine, and Cornelius being yet unknown to Peter. **A just, or righteous man**, instead of "devout man," as in ver. 2. This was a trait of character which these messengers had had opportunity to witness, both in his private affairs and in his public administration. **Of good report among all the nation of the Jews**—by the Jews generally, at Casarea and elsewhere, wherever he was known. Compare this description with that in ver. 2, and with the divine requirement in Micah 6 : 8. **Warned from God**—*divinely instructed*. (Matt. 2 : 12, on which compare note ; Heb. 8 : 5 ; 11 : 7.) The Greek word denotes a divine response and commonly implies a previous prayer. In this case Cornelius had been directed

in answer to prayer. (Ver. 4.) **From God** is not in the original, but the verb is constantly used of divine messages. Compare the instructive warnings given to Joseph (Matt. 2 : 12, 22) and to Noah (Heb. 11 : 7), the revelation to Simon (Luke 2 : 26) and the divine instruction to Moses (Heb. 8 : 5), where this verse occurs. **To send for thee**. This corroborates the Spirit's command to Peter, "For I have sent them." (Ver. 20.) It also affords an explanation why Cornelius had not come himself. **To hear words of thee**—regarding salvation. (11 : 14.) For this he had been praying and this was the express object in sending for Peter. There could be no doubt about the Lord's will in Peter's mind regarding these men and their mission. It was confirmed on all sides. What a new revelation is bursting in upon Peter's soul. Yet he must go to Casarea, and witness there to understand fully. So he calls the messengers in and lodges them. (Ver. 23.)

23-48. PETER GOES TO CASAREA, PREACHES THE GOSPEL TO GENTILES, WHO BELIEVE AND ARE BAPTIZED. (11 : 12-17 ; Deut. 10 : 17 ; Isa. 61 : 1 ; Luke 4 : 18.)

23. And lodged them—*entertained them*, although strangers and Gentiles. **On the morrow**. It was well on into the afternoon (ver. 9), and the men were doubtless weary. **Certain brethren from Joppa accompanied him**. There were six of them. (11 : 12.) They appeared to have gone voluntarily. Peter's vision had naturally awakened their interest and a desire to know the issue of the matter. It was also a wise precaution. They became witnesses to the conversion of Gentiles, and not only assented to their baptism, but some of them also probably performed the act. Peter thus had them in full accord with what was done, and they proved of great advantage to him in his defence at Jerusalem.

Peter preaches to Cornelius and receives believing Gentiles into the church.

AND on the morrow Peter went away with them, ^oand certain brethren from 24 Joppa accompanied him. And the morrow after they entered into Cæsarea. And Cornelius waited for them and had called together his kinsmen and near friends. 25 And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius

met him, and fell down at his feet, and 26 worshipped *him*. But Peter took him up, saying, ^pStand up; I myself also am a 27 man. And as he talked with him, he went in, and found many that were come together.

28 And he said unto them, Ye know how ^qthat it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but ^rGod

^o ver. 45; ch. 11 : 12. ^p ch. 14 : 14, 15; Rev. 19 : 10; 22 : 9. ^q ch. 11 : 2, 3; John 4 : 9; Gal. 2 : 12-14. ^r ch. 15 : 8, 9; Eph. 3 : 6.

(11:12.) The minuteness of detail in the whole account indicates that Luke received it from an eye-witness, while at Cæsarea (27:1), possibly from Peter, or one of these six brethren.

24. On the morrow they entered Cæsarea. A single day was too short for this company of ten to go. It was now the fourth day since the messengers left Cæsarea, probably a little after noon. (ver. 8, 9.) **Cornelius waited for them—was expecting them.** He could calculate the time it would take, and was eagerly anticipating the coming and the message of Peter. **Had called together his kinsmen**—those who were related by blood, **and near friends** who were such by sympathy and follow feelings. They were a large number (ver. 27) and had felt the pious influence of Cornelius. God had been working through him in bringing these Gentiles into a preparatory state for receiving the gospel.

25. As Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him—at the door, where salutations took place). "This first meeting of Cornelius and Peter is one of the great incidents of history." (HOWSON AND SPENCE.) **Fell down at his feet and worshipped him**—*did reverence or homage*. Notice how delicately this is referred to without mentioning *him*, which is not in the original. Cornelius deeply revered the man whose coming was through angelic direction. He honors him as an ambassador of the Lord. Compare the reverence paid to Jesus by Jairus (Mat. 9:18), on which see note. "Since Cornelius acknowledged Jehovah as the true God, and must have regarded him as the only proper object of worship, it is difficult to believe that he intended

this as an act of religious homage." (HACKETT.)

26. Peter took him—raised him up from his prostrate position, by the command, **Stand up**, and the accompanying helping hand. **I also am a man.** He would not receive any undue reverence, nor any appearance of religious homage; nor anything that might encourage it. And as to how much Cornelius meant by his act, Peter might be in doubt. See cases where religious homage was intended. (14 : 15; Rev. 22 : 8, 9.) How unlike Peter are the popes of Rome who claim to be Peter's successors, yet have received the humble homage of kings and people! It has often been noted that Jesus never refused similar homage, which can only be explained by his consciousness of his own divinity. (Matt. 8 : 2; 9 : 8; 14 : 33; 15 : 25.)

27. As he talked with him—conversed familiarly, and on equal terms, enjoying his hospitality. It was now becoming easy for Peter to talk with a Gentile. **He went in**—entered the room where the company was awaiting his arrival, perhaps an upper room. (1:13.) **And found many**—a comparatively large company. Doubtless a matter of satisfaction and surprise to Peter. Well might he be reminded of the first-fruits of Samaritans in our Lord's day,—a field already white unto the harvest. (John 1 : 35.)

28. Coming thus suddenly into a company of Gentiles, who knew of his arrival, Peter feels that some explanation is needful. **Ye know.** He appeals to them as well aware of the hindrances preventing Jews from having social intercourse with Gentiles. The word translated **unlawful** is used only by Peter in the New Testament, here

hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. Therefore came I unto you without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for: I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me?

30 And Cornelias said, Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, and said, Cornelius, thy prayer

* ch. 1 : 10. * Matt. 28 : 3; Mark 16 : 5; Luke 24 : 4. * ver. 4, etc.; Dan. 10 : 12; Hosea 6 : 3.

and in 1 Peter 4 : 3, and denotes that which is *not allowed*, being opposed to and offensive to venerable custom. **To keep company, to join himself to or come unto one of another nation.** Notice Peter uses a softened expression, and does not say *a heathen*. Peter's hearers understood his meaning, as not referring to all intercourse, but to *social*; for commercial dealings were permitted. The law against unclean meats, and against alliances and marriages between Jews and Gentiles (Lev. 11 : 1-4; Deut. 7 : 1-8) had come to be understood as forbidding all social intercourse with them. It seems that the matter of eating and the consequent defilement formed in this case the principal ground of offence, "Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them." (11 : 3.) It is not unlikely that Peter and his company, being weary and hungry on their arrival, had just partaken of refreshments. In this and in other respects they had put themselves on social equality with Gentiles. The declaration of contemporary writers accords with what Peter here says. Thus Josephus (*Cont. Ap.* 11 : 28): "Those foreigners who come to us, without submitting to our laws, Moses permitted not to have any intimate connection with them." And Juvenal (*Sat.* xiv. 103) says extravagantly that "Jews would not show the way, except to their fellow-religionists; nor guide any but a circumcised person to a fountain of which he was in search"; and Tacitus with prejudice (*Hist.* v. 5): "They cherished against all mankind the hatred of enemies; they were separate in board and bed." **But God hath showed me**—in the vision and through the Spirit. (Ver. 13, 19, 20.) **Me** is in emphatic contrast to *Ye* above. *Ye* know, yet God showed me. Man is also emphatic. God shewed that I should not call any man common or unclean.

29. Therefore—because he had been thus divinely corrected regarding

social intercourse with Gentiles. **Came I without gainsaying**—without objecting, and hence without delay: "Contrast Peter's promptness with the hesitation of Moses (Exod. 4 : 10, 13), and of Jeremiah (Jer. 1 : 6), and his gladness with the moroseness of Jonah (Jonah 4 : 1)." (ABBOTT.) **I ask therefore for what intent**, etc. While Peter knew already *the reason*, he desired a fuller statement from Cornelius himself, for the good of all concerned, and as preparatory to what he himself should say. Peter had indeed had a continual revelation of truth, from the trance on the housetop until this hour. The great lesson was confirmed by every successive incident. It really ended only as the Holy Spirit fell upon the believing Gentiles. (Ver. 44-47.)

30. Cornelius in reply relates his vision, what he had done, and his readiness to hear the word of God. (Ver. 30-34; see 11 : 13, 14.) **Four days ago**—when the angel appeared to him, allowing two days for the journey of the messengers of Cornelius, and two for Peter's journey. (See on ver. 24.) **I was fasting until this hour**—from the morning until about the ninth hour. This is the most natural meaning. Some ancient manuscripts omit *fasting* and read, according to the Revised Version, *I was keeping the ninth hour of prayer*, which would show at least the true spirit of fasting. But other old manuscripts contain substantially the reading of the text. Some suppose that *fasting* was omitted by some copyist because it is not mentioned in ver. 2. **In my house**—in retirement at secret prayer. **A man . . . in bright clothing.** Here he describes him according to his appearance; in 11 : 13, Peter speaks of him as he really was, an *angel*. (See 1 : 10; Luke 24 : 4.) Angels in the Bible are never described with wings. Cherubim (Ezek. 10 : 5) and Seraphim are alone so described. (Isa. 6 : 2.)

31. Cornelius, thy prayer is,

is heard, *and thy alms are had in re-
 32 **membrance** in the sight of God. Send
 therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon,
 whose surname is Peter; he is lodged in
 the house of *one* Simon a tanner by the
 sea side; who, when he cometh, shall

33 speak unto thee. Immediately therefore
 I sent to thee; and thou hast well done
 that thou art come. Now therefore are
 we all here present before God, to hear all
 things that are commanded thee of God.
 34 Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said,

* Heb. 6 : 10.

rather *was*, **heard**. Notice that the singular is used instead of the plural, "prayers" in ver. 4 pointing doubtless to some special prayer or petition which he had offered, for enlightenment and clearer views, and assurances concerning salvation. But as this was largely the burden of all his prayers, the plural could also be used. **Thine alms are**, rather, *were remembered*, at the time when given, in the right spirit. See in ver. 4, where prayer and alms are not separated as here.

32. Compare with ver. 5, 6, and note the slight variation and substantial agreement. **Therefore** instead of "and now;" **call hither**—*send* for **Simon**. **When he cometh shall speak unto thee**—concerning the absorbing theme of his thoughts, salvation, its method, and his personal interest in it. (See on ver. 22.) These words are not found in some of the oldest manuscripts; but others have them, and some suppose them to have been omitted because wanting in ver. 6.

33. **Immediately**—the same afternoon of the vision. (Ver. 7.) **Thou hast well done**, in coming so promptly (ver. 29,) and when so much needed. The phrase is a common and courteous one, expressive of gratification and approval. (See Mark 7 : 37; Phil. 4 : 14; James 2 : 8; 2 Peter 1 : 19; 2 John 6.) **Now therefore**—since in my sending and in your coming we have been divinely directed, **are we all here present before God**, as in the presence of Jehovah, who has been preparing our hearts for this very occasion. Notice that Cornelius includes his kinsmen and near friends who were present. He had been diligent in making known the truth so far as he understood it, and in relating the wonderful revelation he had received. And not only this, but he had found out the feelings of the company, and knew they were in sympathy with himself and anxious regard-

ing their spiritual interests. **To hear all things**—reverently and obediently without any disposition to take exception to any requirement that might be made. Cornelius was ignorant of what God might command. He regarded Peter as a messenger from God, and this he had a right to do, since the angel had directed him to send for him, and Peter's own vision and words confirmed it. So it was not Peter's words, but the commands of God through him that Cornelius and his company desired to know. **Commanded thee of God**, or according to the oldest manuscripts, *from the Lord*, in which case they had come to recognize Peter as an ambassador of the Lord Jesus, and now they desire to know fully what he required.

34. **Peter opened his mouth**—indicating the beginning of a regular and important discourse. The same phrase is used of Jesus at the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount. (Matt. 5 : 2.) After the statement that no distinction of race or nation can form any barrier to acceptance with God, Peter presents a summary of the life and work of Jesus, the Lord of all, the Judge of the living and the dead, and the Saviour from sin of all who believe on him.

This verse and the next embody the lesson which Peter had learned, the culmination of the narrative thus far. As Peter takes into view the whole case, Cornelius' vision and experience in wonderful harmony with his own, and the large company before him, reverent and anxiously waiting to hear the word of God, every remaining doubt disappears, and he exclaims, **Of a truth**—it is a fact! **I perceive**—I comprehend it now—that **God is no respecter of persons**. Peter uses a word found in no earlier Greek writer, and only here in the New Testament, meaning literally *an accepter of faces* or appearances, and answers well to our

Of a truth I perceive that God is no
35 respecter of persons: but in every nation

he that feareth him, and worketh right-
36 eousness, is accepted with him. The

† Deut. 10 : 17 ; 2 Chron. 19 : 7 ; Job 34 : 19 ; Rom. 2 : 11 ; 1 Peter 1 : 17. ‡ ch. 15 : 9 ;
1 Cor. 12 : 13 ; Gal. 3 : 28 ; Col. 1 : 6 ; 3 : 11. § Ps. 85 : 9. ¶ Ezek. 18 : 27. ** Gen. 4 : 7 ;
Heb. 11 : 4-6.

phrase, *respecter of persons*. It has reference to external conditions, such as rank, race, or other grounds of external superiority. God is *not partial* on these accounts. Another word, having the same formation, is found four times in the New Testament (Rom. 2 : 11 ; Col. 3 : 25 ; Eph. 6 : 9 ; James 2 : 1), having the same idea of partiality on account of outward circumstances, and not on account of intrinsic merit or moral worth. The truth was not new, for it is asserted in the Old Testament, "The Great God . . . who regardeth not persons." (Deut. 10 : 17 ; 1 Sam. 16 : 7 ; Lev. 19 : 15.) But such words were largely limited by the Jews to their own people, and were regarded as consistent with a divine partiality for Israel. Peter uses the word with a broader application. The words "In every nation" (next verse), show that he means that *race and nation* are among the outward circumstances which do not affect the divine judgment. And as he had expected that Gentiles would receive Christianity through Judaism (see on ver. 1 and 9), he is now convinced that unceremoniousness is no longer any barrier, that Gentiles and Jews stood on an equality before God. The truth, however, in this verse, is put negatively ; in the next verse positively.

35. But in every nation—emphatic. Whether God's chosen race of the Jews or not. **He that feareth him**—exercising a genuine and devout reverence toward God, implying an obedient state of mind. (Luke 1 : 50 ; 1 Peter 2 : 17. See on ver. 2.) **Worketh righteousness**—*lives uprightly*. A phrase applied to those who truly serve God. (Heb. 11 : 33.) The similar phrase "to do righteousness" is found in 1 John 2 : 29 ; 3 : 7 ; 3 : 10. Compare Matt. 6 : 1, where *righteousness* (Revised Version) includes alms, fasting, and prayer, all of which Cornelius appears truly to have observed. **Is accepted with him**—rather, *is acceptable to him*. Such persons as above described are in a

condition to be received and approved by God. But how? Surely not independently of Christ ; for Peter's object in coming was to preach Jesus the Christ, and the burden of his discourse was salvation through him. (Ver. 43.) Cornelius was not a moralist, depending on his morality, for he received Christ as soon as presented by Peter. God had been leading Cornelius and preparing Peter, and his design was "to take out of the Gentiles a people for his name" (15 : 14), not to save them without Christ, but to introduce them into the kingdom of Christ. Cornelius seems to have been in much the same condition as the pious Jew before Christ—a worshiper of the true God, feeling the need of more light, and perhaps, like the eunuch (8 : 28), a reader of the Old Testament Scriptures, and a searcher after the Promised One. He seems to have been in a state acceptable to God through him who was to come. He needed Peter, in order to know the fact of his personal salvation and the method of salvation through Jesus Christ.

But Peter appears to imply that some outside of Cornelius and his company, among all nations might be in a savable state. Since Christ is the Word and the Truth and the Revealer of these to men, all revelations may be traced back to him. If any one by this light is led to see his fallen and helpless condition and cry out, "God be merciful to me, a sinner," ready to accept of Christ, so soon as offered, and shall manifest his sincerity in a prayerful life and devout conduct, may he not be ignorantly but truly a worshiper of God and of him who is the only Revealer of God to men? And this accords with the words of our Saviour, "Many shall come from the east and the west," etc. (Matt. 8 : 11, 12.) "And other sheep I have which are not of this fold," etc. (John 10 : 16.)

Certain facts confirm such a view. In 1820, when the American mission-

word which God sent unto the children of Israel, ⁴ preaching peace by Jesus

⁴ Eph. 2: 13-18; Col. 1: 20.

aries first visited the Sandwich Islands they found that the inhabitants had thrown away their idols and they seemed to be waiting for the gospel, among whom it had great success. The Karens of Burmah had traditions of the coming of the white foreigners who would restore the true religion, and many appeared ready for the reception of the gospel when the missionaries came among them. Godet tells of the "Chinese Hermit who accepted Christ, saying, 'This is the only Buddha men ought to worship.'" The British and Foreign Bible Society publish a statement, on the authority of Sir Bartle Frere, that he met "with an instance which was carefully investigated, in which all the inhabitants of a remote village in the Deccan had abjured idolatry and caste, removed from their temples the idols which had been worshipped there time out of mind, and agreed to profess a form of Christianity which they had deduced for themselves from a careful perusal of a single gospel and a few tracts." (*Judson's Life, by his son*, p. 84.) President Edwards, in his *Life of David Brainerd*, pp. 173-175, tells of "a devout and zealous reformer, or rather restorer, of what he supposed was the ancient religion of the Indians." After a period of distress he says that God "comforted his heart and showed him what he should do, and since that time he had known God and tried to serve him, and loved all men, be they who they would, so as he never did before." Such examples appear as illustrations of a work among the heathen, possibly a very few, who through the guiding Spirit of God have been led to fear him and work righteousness and have thus been prepared to be acceptable to God, through Christ, whom not knowing they substantially worship.

But what bearing has this on Christian missions to the heathen? Why then send missionaries? We answer: 1. To make known Jesus Christ to those who may be craving and looking for a Saviour, 2. To arouse and deepen

this feeling of need and longing in any others who may be seeking after God. 3. To announce Christ to the millions who live on a lower plane of enlightenment than Cornelius and persons of similar experiences. 4. The fact that cases like Cornelius' are sometimes found affords encouragement to push missionary work. The Lord is preparing the way, showing us our duty and opportunity. We should at once heed the call, "Come over and help us," and the encouragement, as the voice of God, saying, "Be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace; for I am with thee . . . for I have much people in this city." (18: 9, 10.)

36. The grammatical construction of this verse and the two following is difficult. Olshausen and some others connect this closely with the preceding verse thus: "He is acceptable to him in respect to or according to the word which God sent," etc. While this expresses a truth it is not the simplest, nor the most natural construction. Better is it to make *the word* an object of a proposition understood. *As to the word which he sent*, etc. Or better still with Meyer and Hackett, to make *the word* an object of the word *know* (ver. 37), as in our English version. The same idea is expressed by the reading of some of the oldest manuscripts and preferred by Westcott and Hort: *He sent the word unto the children of Israel. The word—the message* which was sent from God, **preaching peace**, rather, *proclaiming the glad tidings of peace*, of reconciliation through Jesus Christ. (Luke 1: 79; 2: 14; Matt. 11: 29.) Cornelius and many of the company must have heard of this message among the Jews. See next verse. **He is Lord of all**—not of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also. Peter throws into his sentence the idea of the universal Lordship of Christ, as one of the thoughts uppermost in his mind. (Rom. 3: 29, 30. See Ps. 43; 72: 8-11; Isa. 55: 4, 5; Dan. 2: 44; 7: 13, 14.) This great truth he now understood better than ever before.

37. That word, or *thing*, includ-

37 Christ (he is Lord of all): that word, *I say*, ye ¹know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and ²began from Galilee, after the baptism which John 38 preached; how God ³anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with

power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the 39 devil; ⁴for God was with him. And ⁵we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem. ⁶Whom they slew and hanged on

* Matt. 28 : 18; John 5 : 22, 23; Rom. 10 : 12; Phil. 2 : 9-11; Col. 1 : 16-18; 1 Peter 3 : 22; Rev. 19 : 16. ¹ch. 8 : 40; Luke 4 : 14, 37; 7 : 17. ²ch. 1 : 22. ³Luke 3 : 22; 4 : 18. ⁴John 3 : 2; 16 : 32. ⁵John 15 : 27. ⁶ch. 5 : 30; 1 Peter 2 : 24.

ing the subject matter of the message (ver. 36), the circumstances attending it, and the facts upon which it rested, and further explained in the next verse. **Ye know.** The ministry of John and of Jesus must have been well-known throughout Palestine, not only among Jews, but also Gentiles (Mark 7 : 24), especially those who were drawn towards the Jewish religion. Philip had also preached the gospel at Casarea. (⁸: 40.) Soldiers also moving into different parts would hear more or less of these things. Some have conjectured that Cornelius was the centurion who had charge of Christ's crucifixion (Luke 23 : 47); but this is not very probable. Possibly the latter may have related some of the facts of the crucifixion to Cornelius. **Which was published,** better, *which was done or happened throughout all Judaea*, of which Casarea was the Roman capital. **And began from Galilee**, from whence the fame of Jesus first spread abroad. (Luke 1 : 14, 37.) Several months of Christ's earliest ministry were spent in Judaea in quiet work. (John 3 : 1-23.) Yet before this, immediately after his temptation, Jesus gains his first disciples from among Galileans, and visits Cana and Capernaum. (John 1 : 35-45; 2 : 1-12.) Thus Jesus began from Galilee. At the same time he did not enter fully into his ministry, until after the **baptism which John preached**—that is, until John had completed his ministry and was imprisoned, immediately after which Jesus began to preach in Galilee the good news of the kingdom. (Mark 1 : 14, 15.)

38. Having spoken of the gospel-message and the gospel-history, Peter turns to the person who was the announcer of this message and the central figure of this history. **How God anointed**, etc. Rather, even *Jesus of Nazareth* (3 : 6), *how God anointed*

him; with the Holy Spirit and with power. The Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus at his baptism. (Mark 1 : 10.) Thus he was the divinely Anointed One, *the Christ* (which means *anointed*). (Luke 4 : 18-21.) **Power**, accompanying the unction of the Holy Spirit, has special reference to the miracles, which are immediately spoken of, and which were evidences of his divine mission. So truth, life, faith, joy, and wisdom are elsewhere associated with the Spirit. (John 4 : 23; 6 : 63; Acts 6 : 2, 5; 13 : 52.) **Who went about**, etc. A most beautiful summary of our Lord's ministry, putting special emphasis on our Lord's works, thus reminding us of Mark's gospel, which presents Jesus as the Mighty Worker, and is supposed to have been written under Peter's direction. **Doing good.** Deeds of beneficence and works of mercy were characteristic of Christ's life. **Healing all that were oppressed of the devil.** Peter selects this class of miracles, as among the greatest and most widely known. *Devil* means slanderer or false accuser, and is a name applied to Satan, the great adversary of God, of the Messiah, and of our race. (Luke 8 : 12; John 13 : 2.) Compare Peter's description of him walking about "as a roaring lion." (1 Peter 5 : 8.) While specially referring to casting out demons (see on Matt. 4 : 24), the oppressings of the devil also included various mental and bodily disorders, which were regarded as resulting from Satanic agency. Compare Luke 13 : 16, where the woman who had "a spirit of infirmity" is said to have been "bound by Satan." **For God was with him**—the secret of Christ's power; evidenced by his miracles. So Nicodemus saw and confessed. (John 3 : 2.)

39. Cornelius and his company had only heard of Jesus, his preaching and his wonderful works; but now Peter

40 a tree. Him God raised up the third day,
41 and shewed him openly,^m not to all the
people, but unto witnesses chosen before
of God, even to us,ⁿ who did eat and drink

with him, after he rose from the dead.
42 And^o he commanded us to preach unto the
people, and to testify^p that it is he which
was ordained of God to be the Judge^q of

^m ch. 13 : 31.

ⁿ Luke 24 : 30, 41-43 ; John 21 : 13.

^o Matt. 28 : 19, 20.

^p ch. 17 : 31 ; John

5 : 22-23. ^q Rom. 14 : 9, 10 ; 2 Tim. 4 : 1 ; 1 Peter 4 : 5.

affirms their truthfulness as an eye-witness. **We** is emphatic. As an apostle it was Peter's mission and work to be a witness, and speaking as an apostle, he includes the other apostles. Some or even all of the six brethren who came with him may have been witnesses of many of these things, but not in the sense of having been chosen by God for that purpose. (Ver. 41 ; 5 : 32.) **Whom they slew and hanged**—by hanging, him on a tree. Peter states strongly the humiliating and shameful death of Jesus. So also he did to the Jewish rulers. (5 : 30.) But when preaching to an attentive Jewish audience, striving to persuade and convict, he carefully guards his language. (2 : 28 ; 3 : 14.)

40. In contrast to the cruel treatment of the Jews, God raised up Jesus to life. **Shewed him openly**—caused him to be made manifest. He was distinctly seen and known. The resurrection of Jesus, as in all the discourses of the Acts, is here the culminating point of which the apostles testified. (2 : 32 ; 3 : 15 ; 13 : 31.)

41. The last clause of the preceding verse, this verse, and the next, have reference to the forty days between Christ's resurrection and his ascension. **Not to all the people** of the Jews. It is not recorded that he appeared to any but to his disciples or friends. As Jesus would not work miracles to satisfy the demands of the censorious and self-righteous Pharisees (Matt. 12 : 38, 39), so he would not entrust the evidences of his resurrection to his enemies, or make his appearances to his rejectors and crucifiers. The wonderful phenomena during the crucifixion, the earthquake at the resurrection, and testimony of the guard (Matt. 28 : 11), were sufficient evidences for them. (Luke 16 : 31 ; John 12 : 37.) It was fitting that he should limit his appearances to his followers, to those who would appreciate and properly use the evidence ; and it was becoming to a religion of faith.

Such evidences from eye-witnesses were sufficient, and at the same time would exercise the faith of true believers. Paley argues here the truthfulness of the narrative. A forgery would naturally have represented our Lord's appearances to both friends and foes ; at least would not have limited them on all occasions to his friends. The fact of such limitation shows the candor of the historian. **But unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us**—the apostles. Notice that the apostles were chosen by Christ (1 : 2 ; Luke 6 : 13 ; John 15 : 16), and also by God and given to Christ. (John 17 : 6.) **Who did eat and drink with him** at the same table, enjoying such intimate companionship as to afford tangible evidence of his resurrection. The three recorded instances of this kind are in Luke 24 : 30, 42 ; John 21 : 12-15.

42. Commanded us to preach unto the people—in the last commission, to go into all the world preaching (Matt. 28 : 19 ; Mark 16 : 15), and to be witnesses unto the uttermost part of the earth. (1 : 8) Peter had first limited this to Jews and proselytes from all nations. But now he begins to understand that the gospel is to be proclaimed to all of every nation. (Ver. 35.) They were not only to announce the good news, but also to testify, as witnesses, to speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth : *That this is he who was ordained, appointed by God, the judge of quick, or living, and dead.* (John 5 : 22 ; 1 Thess. 4 : 16, 17 ; 1 Cor. 15 : 51, 52.) Some would take this in a spiritual sense, meaning saints and sinners. The literal sense is the most natural here referring to all generations, past, present, and future. This is the first time that Christ is presented as judge in the Acts. The fact that this is made prominent here and in Paul's address to his heathen audience at Athens (12 : 31), shows that this truth should be made prominent to

43 quick and dead. *To him give all the prophets witness, that *through his name †whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

44 While Peter yet spake these words, †the Holy Spirit fell on all them which 45 heard the word. *And they of the cir-

cumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, *because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit. For they heard them *speak with tongues, and magnify God.

† Isa. 53 : 11; Dan. 9 : 24; Zech. 13 : 1; Luke 24 : 44-47. * ch. 3 : 16. † ch. 26 : 18; John 3 : 16. † ch. 4 : 31; 8 : 15-17. * ver. 23. † ch. 11 : 18; Gal. 3 : 14. * ch. 2 : 4, 11.

such audiences as might fail to understand fully this side of Christ's character.

43. First the law, then the gospel. (Gal. 3 : 24.) Co-extensive with his authority as Judge was his power as a Saviour. **To him give all the prophets witness**—this was the general drift of prophecy. Christ as a Saviour is the central theme of the words and symbols of the prophetic Scriptures. (Rev. 19 : 10.) Peter takes for granted that Cornelius and his company had some knowledge of the Old Testament. **That through his name.** (See on 2 : 21; 3 : 16.) **Whosoever believeth on him**, trusting and relying on him, **shall receive remission, forgiveness, of sins**—including the remitting of the penalty. Thus Peter announces justification by faith: 1. Through the name of Jesus. 2. The condition. *Believeth in him.* 3. The universality of the offer. *Whosoever*, implying that all men need forgiveness. 4. Implying a salvation from sin and its consequences. The gospel to the guilty and perishing is brought to view in a single sentence.

44. While Peter yet spake—showing that he had not finished what he intended to say. In his subsequent defence (11 : 15) he says, "As I began to speak." Thus he was intending to speak at much greater length, and was interrupted suddenly and unexpectedly. **Words and word** refer to the words of truth he had just presented regarding Jesus Christ. Notice that the Spirit came upon them just as he had announced remission of sins through faith. Cornelius and the company at once believed on the name of Jesus. The descent of the Spirit is both a testimony to the truth of Peter's preaching and an evidence of Christ having been received by faith by these Gentile hearers. **The Holy Spirit**

fell—suddenly and from above, implying divine origin. **On all them which heard the word**—the Gentiles to whom Peter was speaking. The Spirit had been leading their hearts into the way of truth; but now he comes upon them with external manifestations of power, and speaking with tongues, as he did at first upon the church at Jerusalem. (Ver. 45-47.) It was the Pentecost of Gentiles. It should be noted that the Holy Spirit came upon them before their baptism and without the laying on of hands. While this shows that salvation is not dependent on outward rites, it was intended as an emphatic lesson to Peter and his company, that "neither circumcision availeth anything, but faith that worketh through love," and that the essential thing in the individual is "a new creature." (Gal. 5 : 6; 6 : 15.)

45. They of the circumcision. The Jewish believers who came with Peter. **Astonished.** The word is emphatic. They were filled with wonder and surprise. This shows how unexpected this descent of the Spirit upon Gentiles was to them, and how needful were all the supernatural occurrences connected with this first mission to Gentiles, and how important that these six Jewish Christians should witness this culminating evidence of the reception of the gospel by the uncircumcised. (11 : 12.) **On the Gentiles**—on the heathen generally, all whom Cornelius and his company represented. Thus this single case was regarded as establishing a general principle. No distinction is to be made between Jews and Gentiles.

46. For—they conclude from the effect. It is not said, as in 2 : 4, that they spake in *other* tongues. This, however, is a briefer description; besides, to **speak with tongues** means with *new* tongues, in languages and

47 Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized which have received the Holy Spirit ^aas well as we? And he com-

manded them to be baptized ^bin the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

^a ch. 11 : 17; 15 : 8, 9; Rom. 10 : 12. ^b ch. 2 : 38; 8 : 16.

dialects besides their own. Instead of "the wonderful works of God" (2:11), here are the words, **magnify God**, setting forth his greatness.

47. Peter also recognizes the descent of the Spirit upon the Gentile converts as the baptism of the Spirit, similar to that of the Jewish disciples at Pentecost. (11:16; 1:4, 5.) **Can any man forbid water?** *The water*, the element into which they were to be baptized for an entrance into the visible church, in contrast with *the Holy Spirit*, the element in which they had received Spirit baptism. "Alford's deduction from the form of expression here, *the water*, that 'the practice was to bring the water to the candidates, not the candidates to the water,' appears to me far-fetched." (ABBOTT.) "The water is in this animated language conceived as the element offering itself for the baptism." (MEYER.) Such popular and animated idioms are not uncommon. "Who shall forbid the house, the school, or the city to this or that one?" would never be taken to mean that either the house, school, or city was to be brought to them; but rather that they should be permitted to enter and enjoy them. Peter, by his question, recognizes the divine approval of these Gentiles, as members of the kingdom of God, and hence as fit subjects of baptism. And not only that it was the duty of these Gentiles to be baptized, but also their duty to baptize them. He does not say, "They now have the Spirit baptism, therefore, they can do without water baptism," but he rather makes the former the strong argument for the latter. (See on ver. 44.) **The Holy Spirit as well as we.** It was just the reason needed for the occasion. "No ordinary attestation would have sufficed to make the divine will perfectly clear, that the Gentiles were to be admitted at once, and on equal terms with the Jews, to the blessings of Christianity." (HOWSON and SPENCE.)

48. He commanded them to be

baptized—by the brethren who came with him. Peter's practice seems in harmony with Paul's. (1 Cor. 1:14, 17.) **In the name of the Lord**—or according to some of the oldest manuscripts, *in the name of Jesus Christ*. This does not indicate the formula (Matt. 28:19), but the fact that these believers were in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17), and that only in him could their Christian baptism be complete. Out of Christ even immersion is not Christian baptism. "As the name of Jesus Christ is the spiritual basis of baptism (2:38) and the end to which it refers (19:5), so it is also conceived as the entire holy sphere in which it is accomplished, and out of which it cannot take place." (MEYER.) **To tarry certain days.** It is implied that Peter remained a few days, enjoying the hospitality of Cornelius, and giving needed instruction. These were days of great importance to them and to him. Whether these Gentile converts were baptized into the fellowship of the church at Jerusalem, or under divine influence and direction a church was at once formed at Caesarea, we are not told. However this may be, it is natural to suppose that during "the certain days" and before Peter left, the first Gentile church at Caesarea was duly organized.

PRACTICAL REMARKS.

1. Service for one's country as a soldier is compatible with true service of God. (Ver. 1; Rom. 13:1-4; Matt. 8:10.)
2. True piety will always exert a salutary influence on the home. (Ver. 2; Gen. 18:19.)
3. "Hours of prayer are truly hours of grace, when the angels of God are most of all prompt in coming." (KARL GEROK). (Ver. 3; 12:5-7; Heb. 1:14.)
4. The prayer of faith ascends to God, like sweet incense, acceptable to him. (Ver. 4; Rev. 5:8.)
5. God has committed the great work of preaching the gospel, not to angels, but to men. (Ver. 5; 1 Peter 1:12.)

6. Peter the apostle, and not Philip the evangelist, must announce the gospel first to Gentiles. (Ver. 6; 15: 7.)

7. In Cornelius and his household we see a beautiful example of family religion. (Ver. 7, 8, 22, 24.)

8. The prompt obedience of Cornelius showed that he believed God. (Ver. 8; James 2: 17, 18; Heb. 11: 8.)

9. Ministers of the gospel should be specially men of prayer. (Ver. 9; Rom. 15: 30.)

10. Our spiritual exercises are often closely connected with our physical condition. (Ver. 10; Matt. 4: 2, 3.)

11. Whatever is of heavenly origin is pure, and whatever is sanctified is to be accepted with thanksgiving. (Ver. 11-13; 1 Tim. 4: 4, 5; James 3: 17.)

12. Customs and ceremonies are nothing against the direct commands of God. (Ver. 14-16; 11: 17.)

13. We should strive after spiritual purity. (Ver. 14-16; 1 Cor. 6: 17-7: 1.)

14. Through Christ the ceremonial law was done away, and the distinction between Jew and Gentile abolished. (Ver. 14-16; Eph. 2: 14, 15.)

15. Redemption through Jesus Christ in its scope and power has relation to the whole physical universe. (Ver. 14-16; Eph. 1: 10; Rom. 8: 19-22.)

16. The knowledge of the apostles, though inspired men, was progressive. (Ver. 16-20, 46, 47.)

17. God suits the events of his providence to our lives and work. (Ver. 17; 27: 9, 16.)

18. We should also seek and follow the directions of the Spirit in matters of religious duty. (Ver. 19, 20; 8: 29; 16: 7; 18: 5.)

19. The prejudices, or the reluctance of man, cannot defeat the purposes of God. (Ver. 19, 20; 15: 24-29.)

20. The messengers of Cornelius illustrate the search of the Gentile world after the wisdom of God. (Ver. 19-22; Matt. 2: 1-12.)

21. It is fitting to seek the advice and instruction of those whom God has appointed to minister in holy things. (Ver. 22; 8: 34.)

22. On important missions the pastor or missionary should be attended with judicious brethren. (Ver. 23, 45; 11: 12; Mark 6: 7.)

23. Like Cornelius, we should invite our friends to hear the gospel. (Ver. 24.)

24. The apostles were disinterested and unselfish men. (Ver. 25, 26; 14: 11-18.)

25. Christianity teaches us to worship God alone. (Ver. 25; Rev. 22: 9.)

26. Ministers of the gospel should not entertain exaggerated views of their office, nor accept undue applause of men. (Ver. 25-27; 1 Tim. 3: 2-6; Rom. 1: 25.)

27. The submission of faith is to do whatever God commands without hesitation. (Ver. 28, 29; Heb. 11: 17, 24.)

28. Like a skillful physician, the pastor should inquire into the spiritual condition of those to whom he would do good. (Ver. 29.)

29. God blesses and reveals himself to those who are in the path of duty. (Ver. 30, 32; 2: 1, 2, Luke 3: 21, 22.)

30. A devout and obedient spirit is becoming the house of God. (Ver. 33.)

31. The blessings of the gospel are given without regard to nationality, wealth, or other external circumstances. (Ver. 34; Luke 2: 10, 32; Gal. 5: 6; Col. 3: 11; Rev. 5: 8.)

32. The power of the gospel is shown in overcoming the prejudices of men. (Ver. 34; 26: 5 f.)

33. Religion is not a matter of indifference. If it were so, Peter would not have been sent to preach Jesus to Cornelius. (Ver. 34, 35; 3: 12.)

34. The works of Cornelius were not the meritorious ground of his acceptance with God, but an evidence of true piety. (Ver. 34; Rom. 3: 20.)

35. Such examples as that of Cornelius are an encouragement for missionary work and for men to use the light they have. (Ver. 35.)

36. The Lordship of Christ should not be overlooked in religious instruction. (Ver. 36; Matt. 28: 18; John 17: 2; Eph. 1: 20, 22.)

37. "Who went about doing good" is a beautiful description of Christ's life, and a fitting example for his followers. (Ver. 38.)

38. Peter's discourse is a model for evangelical preaching. (Ver. 36-43.)

39. Men, however moral and religious, must be saved by the cross. (Ver. 38-43.)

40. Christ is to be presented as our prophet, our priest, and our king. (Ver. 38-43.)

41. The resurrection of Christ is substantiated by many infallible proofs. (Ver. 40, 41; 1 Cor. 15: 4-9.)

42. The piety of Cornelius, who at once accepted Christ, is opposed to the so-called

Peter's conduct criticized at Jerusalem; his successful defence.

11. AND the apostles and brethren that

ch. 10 : 34-48.

morality of those in Christian lands who reject him. (Ver. 43, 44.)

43. The gift of the Holy Spirit is so associated with baptism, as to show that the latter is not a saving ordinance. (Ver. 44-47.)

44. The baptism of the Holy Spirit does not take the place of water baptism, nor do away with it. (Ver. 44-47; 19 : 2-5.)

Ch. 11 : This chapter opens with Peter's defence before the apostles and brethren at Jerusalem. Luke then returns to the general narrative, and notices the connection of the dispersion of Jewish believers through the persecution at the death of Stephen, and the preaching of the gospel at Antioch, first to Jews, and then to Gentiles; and relates how Barnabas and Saul became associated in labors there. The chapter closes with the prophecy of Agabus, and the mission of relief by Barnabas and Saul to Jerusalem. The chapter covers a period of several years, from about A. D. 38 to A. D. 44.

1-18. **PETER DEFENDS HIMSELF AT JERUSALEM FOR HIS VISIT TO CORNELIUS.** It is interesting to compare this with the account in the preceding chapter. Peter's defence was modified by the circumstances surrounding him and the nature of his audience. He was apologetic in language, yet truthful as to facts, and in argument persuasive and invincible. Certain things he omits as unimportant to his purpose, such as the housetop, the hour of the day, his hunger, the preparation of the meal, the homage of Cornelius, his reply, his inquiry and address. But he adds, that the great sheet moved toward him and came near him, upon which he looked intently and deliberately; that the voice came *from heaven*; that *six brethren* accompanied him, and that he remembered the word of the Lord (ver. 16), when the Holy Spirit descended. He lays special stress upon his *praying* when the vision came, the providential coincidence of time and circumstances in this wonderful exper-

were in Judæa heard ^ethat the Gentiles 2 had also received the word of God. And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem,

ience, the command of the Holy Spirit, and the promised baptism of the Spirit. And while he omits the name Cornelius, and his office, as perhaps offensive to the stricter Jews, he speaks emphatically of *the angel* that appeared to him. (Ver. 13.) Such a comparison of the two accounts gives strong proof of the artless simplicity, naturalness, and perfect truthfulness of the whole narrative. (Compare Author's *Harmonic Arrangement*, ½ 19, 20, 21.)

1. This chapter is closely connected with the preceding. Peter appears to have returned to Joppa, from whence he soon after went up to Jerusalem, taking with him the brethren who accompanied him to Cæsarea. (Ver. 12.) **The apostles and brethren that were in, rather, throughout Judæa.** Some were in Jerusalem and others in various parts of the province of Judæa; and some probably going here and there, like Peter, preaching the gospel. **Heard that the Gentiles, or heathen, had received the word of God**—as contained in the gospel. It is implied that they had both embraced it and professed it. The news was startling, and produced a profound sensation; and must have spread rapidly, as the event occurred in the capital of the province. Naturally the apostles and brethren would rejoice in hearing of the conversion of others. But the blessings of the gospel had reached Gentiles who had not first become Jews, and here was the ground of surprise and misapprehension.

2. **When Peter was come to Jerusalem.** He was hastened, it would seem, by the exciting reports of his receiving the uncircumcised into the church. That he went up prepared to meet objections and discussions appears from his taking the six brethren with him. (Ver. 12.) **They of the circumcision**—either the Jewish believers as in 10 : 45, who were characterized for the tenacity with which they held to the necessity of circumcision, or those whose zeal for the law

4 they that were of the circumcision con-
3 tended with him, saying, ^eThou wentest
in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat
with them.

4 But Peter rehearsed *the matter* from the
beginning, and expounded *it* by order
5 unto them, saying, ^fI was in the city of
Joppa praying: and in a trance I saw a
vision, A certain vessel descend, as it had
been a great sheet, let down from heaven
by four corners; and it came even to me;
6 upon the which when I had fastened
mine eyes, I considered and saw four-

footed beasts of the earth, and wild
beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of
7 the air. And I heard a voice saying unto
8 me, Arise, Peter; slay, and eat. But I
said, Not so, Lord: ^hfor nothing common
or unclean hath at any time entered into
9 my mouth. But the voice answered me
again from heaven, What God hath
cleansed, *that* call not thou common.
10 And this was done three times: and all
11 were drawn up again into heaven. And,
behold, immediately there were three
men already come unto the house where

^d ch. 10 : 45; Gal. 2 : 12.

^e ch. 10 : 23, 28.

^f Luke 1 : 3.

^g ch. 10 : 9-18.

^h Rom. 14 : 14.

shortly after originated a Judaizing party. (15 : 1, 24; Gal. 5 : 1-6, 12; 6 : 12.) The first view best sustained by critical authorities. *And when Peter*, etc., rather favors the latter view. While the apostles and brethren generally were surprised and puzzled by the wondrous displays of divine grace, those who were the greatest sticklers and most zealous for the law, were doubtless the leaders in *contending* with Peter.

3. The substance of the charges against Peter. *Thou wentest into, the society of men uncircumcised*, putting yourself on an equality with them. *Men uncircumcised* is an expression often used in indignation and contempt. (Eph. 2 : 11.) *And didst eat with them*. This familiar and social fellowship was the leading offence, and involved all the rest. (See on 10 : 28.) They do not condemn Peter for preaching the gospel to Gentiles, for Jesus had commanded that it should be preached to all nations, but for doing it in such a way as to shock their cherished ideas of what was pure and lawful.

4. Peter replies calmly, simply relating his experience in the matter, showing that the thing was evidently from God. His experience speaks for itself. The superhuman manifestations left no doubt concerning the divine will. The repetition also shows the importance attached to these facts in the conflict of the gospel with Judaizing tendencies. *From the beginning*—it was of great importance that Peter should set forth all the facts in the order of their occurrence. (See 3 : 24, 18 : 23; Luke 1 : 3.)

5. It was necessary therefore that Peter should state the place Joppa

(9 : 36), and the fact that he was *praying*, when he had this remarkable experience. *In a trance I saw a vision*—language which would commend itself to the Jewish mind, in accordance with their ideas of divine manifestations. *It came even to me*—an important addition to his previous account, showing that the vision was not distant, nor indistinct. (See on 10 : 9-11.)

6. *Upon the which when I had fastened mine eyes—into which* descending vessel, *I gazed intently, and considered* what there was therein. Another important addition, showing that he saw everything distinctly, and there could have been no mistake. Then follows the description of 10 : 12.

7. *I heard a voice*—indicating that it was audible.

8. The answer varies in form from 10 : 14, but is the same in substance. A good illustration of how the same idea may be variously and truthfully stated.

9. *Answered*—more vivid than the form of expression in 10 : 15. *From heaven*. Peter adds this fact, thus giving emphasis to the divine origin of the voice.

10. Instead of “received up” (10 : 16) Peter uses the phrase *drawn up again*, as by cords into heaven. (10 : 11.) Peter describes it as he actually saw it.

11. Without referring to his perplexity regarding the vision, or to the inquiries of the messengers for the house of Simon the tanner (10 : 18, 19), Peter briefly and vividly calls attention to the remarkable coincidence of the arrival, *Behold immediately there were three men already come*

12 I was, sent from Casarea unto me. And
¹the Spirit bade me go with them, nothing
doubting. Moreover ^kthese six brethren
accompanied me; and we entered into
13 the man's house: ¹and he showed us how
he had seen ^man angel in his house,
which stood and said unto him, Send men

to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose sur-
14 name is Peter; who shall tell thee words,
whereby thou and all thy house shall be
15 saved. And as I began to speak, the
Holy Spirit fell on them, ⁿas on us at the
16 beginning. Then remembered I the word
of the Lord, how that he said, ^oJohn

ch. 10 : 19, 20; 15 : 7; John 16 : 13. ^k ch. 10 : 23. ¹ ch. 10 : 30. ^m Heb. 1 : 14. ⁿ ch.
2 : 4; 10 : 44. ^o ch. 1 : 5; 19 : 4; Matt. 3 : 11; John 1 : 26, 33,

unto the house where I was,
showing the providential hand of God.
Every clause of this narrative is an
argument.

12. (See on 10 : 20, 23.) **Nothing doubt-**
ing—making no scruple; or, according
to another reading, preferred by West-
cott and Hort, *making no distinction*
between Jews and Gentiles. **These**
six brethren accompanied me—
two facts additional to previous narra-
tive are stated: That the brethren who
went with him to Casarea were *six* in
number, and that they came with him
to Jerusalem, perhaps as witnesses and
to verify his statements. Notice also
how Peter omits everything not neces-
sary to his purpose, and briefly says,
we entered into the man's house,
the justification of the act being found
in what he had just said, and confirmed
by what follows. He also simply terms
Cornelius *the man*, without mentioning
his Roman name or his military rank.
These would have weakened the per-
suasive power of his speech.

13. (See on 10 : 30-32.) **And he showed**
us, told us, how he had seen an
angel. Instead of the indefinite *an*
there should be the definite expression,
the angel, not only known to the reader
(10 : 22); but implying that Peter's ears,
had heard the story of the angelic appear-
ance to Cornelius. **In his house—**
the very house Peter entered. Suggest-
ing, that if an angel had entered the
house of a Gentile on an errand of
grace, surely Peter should not hesitate
to follow. Merely, **send to Joppa,**
men being omitted according to the
best critical authorities.

14. This is fuller than 10 : 22, and
shows more clearly the nature of the in-
formation which Cornelius desired.
His longing was to be saved, and to
know *how*. (See on 10 : 35.) He needed
that peace and restful assurance which
the gospel only can give. "Peter

declares, not that Cornelius was not a
sinner, but that God had accepted him
through Christ; Cornelius was already
justified, but he needed to know (1)
that he was saved, and (2) *how* he was
saved; and Peter was sent to tell him
of the fact, and of the method, of his
salvation in Christ." (DR. A. H.
STRONG, *Systematic Theology*, p. 296.)
And all thy house—for they also had
shared in the religious convictions and
desires of Cornelius. There is no
foundation here for salvation of chil-
dren on the faith of parents, for in 10 :
2, it is said that all his house *feared*
God.

15. **And as I began to speak—**
showing that he intended to say more
than in 10 : 35-44, but was suddenly in-
terrupted by the descent of the Holy
Spirit. **As on us at the beginning**
—with like manifestations of power.
(10 : 46.) Peter regarded Pentecost as a
starting point, the time of the organi-
zation of the visible church. It is a
fair inference that no such display of
the Spirit had been given since Pente-
cost, else Peter would not have gone so
far back. We may also infer that we
are not to expect a repetition of such a
miraculous display of the Spirit. The
Spirit now is given to believers to dwell
in their hearts as a Sanctifier, and as
a Comforter, or Helper. (Rom. 8 : 9, 11.)

16. **Then remembered I the**
word of the Lord. How natural
and life-like, for Peter to refer to this
process of his own mind, when the
words of the Lord (1 : 5) came to him
with an enlarged meaning and applica-
tion. The promise, "Ye shall be bap-
tized with the Holy Spirit, not many
days hence," he had been accustomed
to limit to Pentecost and the organiza-
tion of the church at Jerusalem. Now
he sees that it has a broader applica-
tion,—that Gentiles are to share equally
with the Jews, and that Gentile

indeed baptized with water; but ye shall
17 be baptized with the Holy Spirit. ^qForasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as *he did* unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; ^rwhat was I, that I could withstand God?

18 When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, say-

ing, ^sThen hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

The gospel at Antioch; ministry of Barnabas and Saul in that city.

19 ^tNOW they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as ^uPhenice, and

^r Isa. 44 : 3; Joel 2 : 28.

^q ch. 15 : 8, 9.

^s ch. 10 : 47.

^t Rom. 10 : 12, 13; 15 : 9, 16.

^u ch. 8 : 1-4; see Matt. 10 : 23.

^v ch. 21 : 2.

churches are to be organized, on equal footing with the Jerusalem church, and not dependent on it. Moreover, may we not infer that the baptism in the Holy Spirit was attended by such miraculous manifestations as those of Pentecost and at Caesarea, since Peter limits it to those two occasions? And that the promise was fulfilled and limited to those two events? Notice also that Peter omits his own discourse at Caesarea. It was of little importance what he had there said, but it was of the first moment, what God did.

17. Forasmuch then, etc. *If therefore God gave the equal, or the same gift.* Peter now makes his application and clinches the argument.

Unto us—unto us having believed upon the Lord Jesus Christ, that is, as believers. The same gift indicated the same faith in *them* as in *us*. Notice how Peter also had laid stress on faith in his address at Caesarea. (10 : 43.)

What was I that I could withstand, or oppose God. The argument is: as God himself had determined the matter, opposition would have been both futile and presumptuous. Dr. Alexander thus sums up the case: "Since then it is evident from what I have related, that the question was determined by divine authority, and wholly independent of me, nay, in total opposition to my previous opinions and desires, I leave it to yourselves whether I could have done otherwise, and whether I am justly liable to censure."

18. The effect of Peter's defence was instantaneous and complete. **They held their peace**—a solemn silence ensues, but it is soon followed with praise, giving glory to God. **Then,** unlikely as it seems to us, **hath God also to the Gentiles,** the heathen, **granted repentance unto life,**

which is necessary to salvation and which secures eternal life. (2 Cor. 7 : 10.) See on 2 : 38, where repentance is commanded, and 5 : 31, where as here it is represented as a divine gift, the disposition to repent being awakened by the Holy Spirit.

The change of views in the Jerusalem church in regard to Gentiles seemed complete. Yet a few years after this, perhaps from brethren not present at this conference, at Jerusalem, arose a Judaizing faction, laying special stress on circumcision, and even claiming the necessity of it to salvation. (15 : 1.) And even Peter, though he was the first one to extend fellowship to Gentiles on equal terms with Jews, yielded for a short time and to a certain extent to these false teachers. (Gal. 2 : 11-14.) How important was it then that God should have at the very first converted Peter, the strong Jew, and the apostle to the circumcision, to the great truth that God is no respecter of persons. (10 : 34.)

19-30. THE GOSPEL AT ANTIOCH. THE MINISTRY OF BARNABAS AND SAUL IN THAT CITY. Briefly tracing events from the death of Stephen to the charitable mission of Barnabas and Saul to Jerusalem, a period of about nine years.

19. Luke now returns to his general narrative of the early progress of the gospel. Going back to the death of Stephen as a starting point, he hastens toward the introduction of the gospel into Antioch, which was to become illustrious as the great centre of missionary operations in the Gentile world. Already he had noticed the extension of the gospel into Samaria (8 : 14.) as a result of the scattering of the disciples by the persecution, or tribulation that arose on account of Stephen. We have also intimations of the progress of the gospel in Judea,

Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word
20 to none but unto the Jews only. And

some of them were men of Cyprus and
Cyrene, which, when they were come

outside of Jerusalem. (9 : 31, 32.) These persecuted disciples pushed their missionary labors outside of Judea up to the time of the conversion of Cornelius, preaching to the Jews only. Their course is traced northward, taking in Phœnicia, Cyprus, and Antioch. **Phœnicie**, or Phœnicia was an important commercial country along the Mediterranean, about twenty miles wide and one hundred and twenty miles long, the principal cities of which were Tyre and Sidon. It was once visited by our Lord. (Matt. 15 : 21-28.) Its limits varied at different times. **Cyprus** was a large island in the Mediterranean, about sixty miles from the coast of Palestine. (See on 4 : 36.) It was the birthplace of Barnabas. **Antioch** stood near the angle formed by the coast of Syria and Asia Minor, on the river Orontes, about fifteen miles from its mouth, and about three hundred miles from Jerusalem. It was the third in rank among the cities of the Roman world, containing probably a population of five hundred thousand, the capital of the Roman province of Syria, and the residence of the Pro-consul of the province. It was illustrious for men of great learning; and the poet Archias owed his birth and education to this city. "It was famous for the beauty of its position and the splendor of its buildings, and infamous for the profligacy and fraud, sorcery and effeminaey of its people." It contained a mixed population—the Greeks, the more wealthy; the Latins, the officials, civil and military; the Syrians, the working classes and slaves; and the Jews, in large numbers, who occupied a separate quarter under their own governor. The Roman road along the coast of the Mediterranean made Antioch easy of access from Judea. (See further on 6 : 5.)

20. The preaching at Antioch and in other places thither, related in the preceding verse, may be regarded as having occurred before the conversion of Cornelius, for the missionaries preached according to their custom, to the Jews only. The preaching to Gen-

tiles at Antioch, related in this verse, must have taken place after Cornelius' conversion, for Peter was the one who formally opened the kingdom of God to Gentiles. (15 : 7.) **Men of Cyprus**—Jews or proselytes who were natives of Cyprus. (21 : 16.) **And Cyrene**—a city of Libya on the north coast of Africa, west of Egypt, where the Jews were very numerous. The Cyrenians had a synagogue in Jerusalem (6 : 9), some of them were in Jerusalem at Pentecost (2 : 10), and one at least at the passover immediately preceding. (Luke 23 : 26.) Cyprus and Cyrene were united in one province about this time. **Spake unto the Grecians**—the *Hellenists*, or *foreign Jews*; but the text should rather be, *Spake to the Greeks*, that is, to the Gentiles. We meet here the most important textual difficulty in the Acts of the Apostles. The majority of manuscripts read *Hellenists*, and it is adopted by Westcott and Hort. A few manuscripts and some versions read *Greeks*, which is supported by internal evidence. For this reading alone brings out the sharp contrast between those who had now received the gospel and those who received it previously. "It would have been nothing new to have preached at this time to the Greek-speaking Jews." (HACKETT.) This reading therefore is adopted by the majority of commentators and textual critics. Those who adopt the other reading make the contrast between Hellenists of this verse and resident Jews of the preceding verse. Thus Alexander: "But why may he not be simply understood as saying that when the refugees arrived at Antioch, such of their number as were Hellenists, or foreign Jews, preached to the Jews of their own class whom they found there, as the Hebrew or native exiles had done on the way to their own countrymen?" But this verse not only presents something in contrast to that stated in ver. 19, but also something additional and new. And the preaching of the gospel to Jews who spoke Greek, or to proselytes could not be spoken of as a new thing, for that had

10 Antioch, spake unto ^athe Grecians,
21 preaching the Lord Jesus. And ^bthe
hand of the Lord was with them: and a
great number believed, and ^cturned unto
the Lord.
22 Then tidings of these things came unto

the ears of the church which was in Jeru-
salem: and they sent forth ^aBarnabas,
that he should go as far as Antioch.
23 Who, when he came, and had seen the
grace of God, was glad, and ^bexhorted
them all, that with ^cpurpose of heart

^a ch. 6: 1; 9: 29. ^b ch. 2: 47; Luke 1: 66.
9: 27. ^c ch. 13: 43; 14: 22; Deut.

^a ch. 9: 35; 1 Thess. 1: 9. ^b ch. 4: 36, 37;
10: 20; 1 Cor. 15: 58. ^c Dan. 1: 8.

taken place at Pentecost. Indeed, the only thing that fully meets Luke's distinction as to the two classes of preachers, is, that the Greeks addressed at Antioch were heathen, and not merely proselytes, for the latter had become incorporated into Judaism by circumcision. Another serious objection to this reading is, that then this passage contains no mention of the extension of the gospel among the Gentiles of Antioch, which afterward became the seat of Gentile Christianity. **Preaching the Lord Jesus**—as Lord of all (10: 36) and *Jesus*, the Saviour. (Matt. 1: 21) Appropriate preaching to Gentiles.

21. The hand of the Lord—the hand is a symbol of power. (Luke 1: 66; John 12: 38.) **Was with them**—giving tokens of his approval, perhaps with miraculous manifestations, as of healing, as in 4: 30. The principal idea, however, is that of spiritual power in connection with the proclamation of the truth, in conviction and conversion. Hence **a great number believed**—or, *believing* the preaching, **turned from their false faith and heathen practices unto the Lord**, unto Christ as their Lord. That these were uncircumcised Gentiles is evident. But whether they were idolaters, or seekers after the true God is uncertain. Many Gentiles during this period were proselytes and many, like Cornelius and his friends, were more or less convinced that Jehovah was the true God. From such the early Gentile converts were probably gathered for the most part. (14: 1; 18: 4; John 12: 20.) The conversion of these Gentiles at Antioch was probably almost simultaneous with that of Cornelius. The Christian community formed rapidly, and while that of Cesarea was doubtless first in time, this at Antioch soon became first in importance.

22. The conversion of Cornelius and

this work among Gentiles at Antioch were providentially fitted to teach the church at Jerusalem the full meaning of our Lord's commission in Matt. 28: 19 and Acts 1: 8. **Then tidings of these things**—rather, *and the report of them*, of the Gentile converts and their teachers. The local church in Jerusalem continued to be the great center of influence and of missionary operations. Its importance arose very largely from the fact that it was the first Christian church, and that it included the apostles, who were inspired teachers and organizers. In this case they send not an apostle as to the Samaritans (8: 14), but a teacher who, from his character and his nation, was peculiarly fitted for the mission of looking after the work at Antioch and correcting any error. **Barnabas**, being “a son of exhortation” (4: 36), having rare gifts of speech and exhortation, a man of great benevolence and a native of Cyprus, was well fitted for a mission requiring careful management, where also fellow Cyprians were laboring. Being also a friend of Paul (9: 27), he would likely be in sympathy with the work among Gentiles. He was thus selected, not on official, but on personal grounds. **That he should go as far as Antioch**—visiting the brethren on the way.

23. Had seen the grace of God—toward Gentiles in their conversion. Some surprise seems to be indicated by the language. However this may be, he found nothing to censure or correct. He saw no reason to doubt the work as of God, and therefore he rejoiced. **And exhorted them all** who had believed (ver. 21), whether Jew or Gentile, without any reference to circumcision or uncircumcision. He showed a broad and loving spirit, and did his work thoroughly. He also distinguished himself as “a son of exhortation.” (4: 36.) **With purpose of**

24 they would cleave unto the Lord. For he was a good man, and ^dfull of the Holy Spirit and of faith. ^eAnd much people was added unto the Lord.

25 Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for

26 to seek Saul; and when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disci-

^d ch. 6 : 5 ; Gal. 5 : 22, 23.

^e ch. 5 : 14.

^f ch. 9 : 30.

heart—with sincere and earnest determination. **They would cleave unto the Lord**—continue to be steadfastly devoted to the Lord. He has no new doctrines to propound, no new duties to enforce. He gives the work his unqualified approval.

24. For introduces the reason, not why Barnabas had been sent to Antioch, but why he had exhorted the converts to perseverance and progress. **He was a good man**—an excellent man, of kind and noble disposition, above envy and censoriousness, and ready for every good work. **Full of the Holy Spirit and faith**—similar to what is said of Stephen (6 : 5), an earnest and deeply spiritually-minded man, imbued with the Spirit, and exercising strong faith. As a consequence he was an efficient worker, and through the blessing of the Lord, many new converts were **added**.

25. The work became so great that Barnabas saw that he needed a helper. He who had sent Saul away to the Gentiles (22 : 21), doubtless now directed the mind of Barnabas to him. Barnabas very likely knew something of this vision of Saul. About four years had passed since Saul went to Tarsus. (9 : 30.) This period of his life is passed over in silence. But he could not have been idle. It is probable that he organized those churches in Cilicia, mentioned in 15 : 41, and that about the time of the conversion of Cornelius he himself began to preach the gospel to the uncircumcised. At first he may have given special attention to proselytes, till under providential and divine direction he preached the gospel to the heathen. Paul's general summary of his work in Rom. 15 : 19, 20, and of the perils and persecutions through which he had passed (2 Cor. 11 : 23-27) may be referred partly to this period. **Tarsus.** (See on 9 : 11.) This is the last mention of Saul at Tarsus in the New Testament. He may afterward have

visited the city, when he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches (15 : 41), or possibly again when returning to Ephesus from Antioch, on his third missionary journey. (18 : 23; 19 : 1.) **To seek Saul**—not knowing where he might find him.

26. And when he had found him—implying a search for him on the part of Barnabas. He would naturally go to Tarsus first. Quite likely Barnabas found Saul working quietly and faithfully for the Lord in one of the cities of Cilicia, with an organized band of brethren around him. **And brought him to Antioch**—implying a persuasive influence of Barnabas upon Saul, to which the latter yielded. From this point Saul rises into prominence in the Acts, as an apostle. How much he owed to Barnabas, both in his introduction to the disciples at Jerusalem (9 : 27), and at Antioch! "The character of Barnabas is set before us in a most attractive light in that he brought out of retirement one whose eminence was sure to supersede and eclipse his own. This is forcibly noted by Calvin." (HOWSON AND SPENCE.) His great worth and influence in the early church has been too much overlooked. Two facts have thus far been stated as results of Barnabas going to Antioch, a great ingathering and the inducing Saul to come to the work. It was fitting that two should thus be associated, and it was conducive to greater success. Our Lord sent out disciples, two by two. (Mark 6 : 7; Luke 10 : 1.) The apostles sent two to Samaria. (8 : 14.)

Two additional facts are stated, as the result of the joint labors of Barnabas and Saul: Large congregations with increased success, and the church coming into such prominence as a distinct community as to receive the distinctive name of Christian. This work went on for a **whole year**, and during this time **the disciples first received the name of Christians**. The lan-

ples were called Christians first in Antioch.

Famine in Judæa. Help sent from Antioch.

27 AND in these days came ^b prophets

28 from Jerusalem unto Antioch. And there stood up one of them named ⁱAgabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claud-

^c ch. 20 : 26; Eph. 3 : 15; 1 Peter 4 : 14, 16.

^b ch. 13 : 1; 15 : 32; 21 : 9; Rom. 12 : 6; 1 Cor. 12 : 10, 28; Eph. 4 : 11.

ⁱ ch. 21 : 10.

guage implies that they did not assume the name, nor was it divinely given, for then it would have been used more frequently, whereas it is a fact that the name occurs only in two other passages in the New Testament (26 : 28; 1 Peter 4 : 16), and is applied to them by others. (See James 2 : 7.) Luke's allusion to the origin of the name, however, implied that, when he wrote, it had obtained considerable currency. It could not have been given by Jews, for they called the disciples Nazarenes (24 : 5), and they would not have bestowed upon them a title which implied that they were followers of the Messiah. Its form, like *Herodians*, seems to indicate a Latin origin. Hence some suppose that the public authorities at Antioch gave the name to this growing community, which was bound together by allegiance to one "Christus." Possibly, as others suppose, it was at first a name of derision, for the inhabitants of Antioch are said to have been noted for thus employing names derisively. Others still regard it as a term of opprobrium. "The name was first given to the worshipers of Jesus by the Gentiles, but from the second century onward, accepted by them as a title of honor." (THAYER, *Greek Lex.*) This new name indicates a considerable community, and the existence of a church of Christ independent of Judaism. Henceforth the church at Antioch becomes in apostolic history the mother church of Gentile, as Jerusalem was of Jewish Christendom. Yet not in antagonism, but as allies and helpers of each other. (Ver. 27 : 30 : 15 : 1 f.)

27. The incident related in this and the three following verses is introductory to what follows, and also forms a connecting link between the two chapters. **And in these days**—while Barnabas and Saul were teaching at Antioch. (Ver. 25, 26.) **Came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch.** Whether they were sent, or came of

their own accord, is not told us. Probably led thither under the guidance of the Spirit. **Agabus**—a prophet—that is, one who speaks forth—a spokesman for God. He was an inspired teacher, whose duties were by no means limited to foretelling future events, but included messages of instruction, warning, and direction regarding the cause and kingdom of God and human salvation. (15 : 32.) While those who spoke with tongues rose into a state of excitement and ecstasy, often so far losing their intellectual consciousness as to need an interpreter (1 Cor. 12 : 10; 14 : 13), the prophet with less excitement, and conscious of all his mental exercises, but filled with the Spirit, spoke by God's authority and command, and needed no one to interpret. (1 Cor. 14 : 4, 19.) Sometimes women were prophets. (21 : 9; see 2 : 17, 18; 2 Kings 22 : 14.)

28. Agabus is mentioned only here, and in 21 : 10. Nothing more is known of him. **Signified by the Spirit**—made known through the aid and illumination of the Holy Spirit. Compare in the life of Paul, 16 : 6, 7; 20 : 22, 23. **A great dearth**, scarcity of harvests, *famine*. **Throughout all the world**—upon all the inhabited earth, a phrase rather vaguely used of the whole Roman Empire. (Luke 2 : 1.) It seems to have been used sometimes in a restricted sense, meaning the land of Palestine and adjacent countries. (Isa. 10 : 23.) But it need not be thus restricted here. **Which came to pass in the days of Claudius Cæsar.** Cæsar is not found in many important manuscripts and versions, and was probably added as an explanation by some transcriber. The Emperor Claudius reigned from A. D. 41–54. During his reign different parts of the empire suffered successively from severe famines. There had been a scarcity of provisions at Rome in the first and second year of his reign. According to Eusebius a great famine

29 ius Caesar. Then the disciples, ¹every man according to his ability, determined to send ¹relief unto the brethren which

30 dwelt in Judæa: which also they did, and sent it to ^mthe elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

* 2 Cor. 8 : 2-4, 12-14.

¹ Rom. 15 : 25-27; 1 Cor. 16 : 1.

^m ch. 16 : 4; 20 : 17; Titus 1 : 5;

James 5 : 14; 1 Peter 5 : 1.

prevailed in Greece in the ninth year of his reign; and in the eleventh year famine was felt at Rome, according to Tacitus and Suetonius. One that seriously affected Judea and Jerusalem began about A. D. 44, and continued three or four years. According to Josephus this "great famine occurred when Cuspius Fadus and Tiberius Alexander were procurators. During which Queen Helena of Actiabene, a Jewish proselyte, came to Jerusalem, which proved of great advantage. "For whereas a famine did oppress them at that time, and many people died for want of what was necessary to procure food withal, Queen Helena sent some of her servants to Alexandria with money to buy a great quantity of grain, and others of them to Cyprus, to bring a cargo of dried figs. And as soon as they were come back, and had brought those provisions, which was done very quickly, she distributed food to those who were in want of it, and left a most excellent memorial behind of her benefaction, which she bestowed on the whole nation." (*Antiq.* xx. 2 : 5.) These various local famines occurring one after the other in different parts of the Roman Empire may very justly be viewed by the eye of prophecy as a great famine coming upon all the earth.

29. The effect of the prediction upon the church at Antioch is now given, showing the fraternal relation existing between the churches. **The disciples**—a common designation of Christians throughout the Acts. (6:1; 9:1; 15:10.) It is not here stated whether they immediately sent their gifts, or waited until they heard that the famine had actually begun. The latter view is the most probable, for Agabus did not specify when the famine would reach Judea, and from the next chapter it would appear that the offerings were sent to Jerusalem in the last year of Herod, A. D. 44. Scarcity may have been felt early in the year through the

failure of crops; and the delegation with their contributions would then naturally come later, after the martyrdom of James, and the miraculous deliverance of Peter. (12:25.) **Every man**—*every one*. The first element in Christian giving. Each one gave freely. **According to his ability**—*according as he was prospered*. The second element in Christian benevolence. The contributions were entirely voluntary, and each one for himself determined conscientiously his own share. The principle acted upon was that afterward practiced and inculcated by Paul. (1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 8:12.) **Unto the brethren**—another designation of Christians used frequently in the Acts. (9:30; 17:10; 28:14, 15.) A fitting appellation here. It was fitting that the more prosperous should thus help their suffering *brethren*. **In Judea**—not only at Jerusalem, but in places outside, since the famine was general. Antioch was a wealthy commercial city, and it is implied that the disciples were in a prosperous condition. In Jerusalem the Sadducean and Pharisaic parties formed the wealthy and prosperous classes. The Christians of Jerusalem and Judea had given largely in the community of goods, and had suffered by persecution, and originally may have been gathered largely from the humbler classes. The Christians at Antioch showed, not only a *brotherly* feeling, but also a sense of filial obligation to the mother church at Jerusalem. This benevolent home work was preparing the Antioch church for her later foreign missionary work.

30. **Which also they did**—they executed their determination at the proper and needed time, **by the hands**, through the agency of **Barnabas and Saul**. This shows how highly these two men were regarded by the church at Antioch. How fitting that the "son of consolation" (4:36) should return with gifts; and that Saul should thus minister to those whom, by

persecution, he had helped to impoverish. **Sent it to the elders**—who could forward the supplies to the deacons and brethren in different places for distribution, as necessity required.

This is the first mention of *elders* connected with the churches. While the origin of deacons can be traced to the choosing of the Seven (6:17), no account is given of the origin of elders. Some suppose that by *elders* here are meant honorable and elderly men, including the officials or deacons of the churches in Judea, and that out of those, as circumstances required, grew the office of elder in distinction from that of deacon. Others regard the church at Jerusalem as modeled after the Jewish synagogue. To this it may be objected: (1) That the model is not exact. There was nothing in the synagogue to correspond exactly with deacons; and the "Chief of the synagogue" has no corresponding office in the church, mentioned in the New Testament. (2) The apostles, being inspired men, to whom was entrusted the organization of the early church, would not be likely to confine themselves to the Jewish synagogue as a model. Without doubt the synagogue exerted an influence. When the office of elder first arose in the church, it being similar in the main to that in the synagogue, it was natural that the accustomed term for such an office should be used. The terms elder, or presbyter; and bishop, overseer or pastor, are used interchangeably in the New Testament. Thus Paul designates the elders of Ephesus overseers or bishops. (20:17, 28.) In giving charge to Titus concerning the ordination of this class, he calls them interchangeably elders and bishops. (Titus 1:5-7.) And Peter exhorts elders to act as bishops or pastors of the flock. (1 Peter 5:1-3.) The qualifications required of them were identical. (1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5.) Ordination, which Episcopacy claims as the prerogative of a third and higher class of church officer, the post-apostolic bishop, was conferred by elders; for Timothy was ordained by the presbytery, or eldership. (1 Tim. 4:14.) The term *elder* was used more generally by Jewish Christians, and pointed to the dignity

and authority of the office; while Gentile believers employed oftener the term *bishop* or overseer, indicating rather the character of the work. But however styled, they were entrusted with the oversight and guidance of the flock, which are plainly the work of the pastor. See fuller discussions on 14:23; 20:17.

This visit of Saul to Jerusalem was the second after his conversion. In his Epistle to the Galatians he omits this, and speaks only of the first and third journeys to Jerusalem. (Gal. 1:18; 2:1.) But Paul's object did not there require him to mention all his journey. "In the first chapter there he would prove that as an apostle he was independent of all human authority; and in the second chapter, that the other apostles had conceded to him that independence. He had no occasion, therefore, to recapitulate his entire history." (HACKETT.) There is thus no contradiction between Luke and Paul. At the same time we see reasons for its omission: It was not necessary to speak of it. Besides, the mention of this visit would have been extraneous, and really weakening to his subject. In this Barnabas is rather the leader, but in his first and third visits Paul's apostolic character is recognized. (9:30; 2:21; 15:2; Gal. 2:7.)

CHRONOLOGICAL NOTE. Paul was converted in the latter part of the reign of the Emperor Tiberius, who died early in A. D. 37. In the year 36, Pontius Pilate was dismissed by Vitellius, the Legate or Governor of Syria, and Marcellus was sent to be Procurator in his stead. The same year Caiaphas was deposed by Roman authority, and succeeded by Jonathan. The year after Marcellus made way for Marullus; and Theophilus was made high priest in place of his brother Jonathan. Caligula succeeded Tiberius as Emperor, A. D. 37; Vitellius was recalled from Syria, and Petronius took his place at Antioch. But during the year 37, it appears that Aretas, king of Arabia, got possession of Damascus and held it for a year or more. (2 Cor. 11:32.) In A. D. 39 and 40, Caligula attempted to force the Jews to worship him as God, and commanded his statue to be

placed in the temple at Jerusalem. The feeling of horror aroused by this among the Jews doubtless turned their minds from the growing communities of Christians throughout Palestine, and contributed to the rest they enjoyed. But the murder of Caligula, January 24th, A. D. 41, put a stop to his infamous plans. He was succeeded by Claudius, Vibius Marsus is made Governor of Syria at Antioch; and Herod Agrippa I. rules over the whole territory which had been governed by his grandfather, Herod the Great. (See on 12:1.) In A. D. 44, Herod dies, and Cuspius Fadus succeeds him as Procurator of Judea. It was about this time that Barnabas and Saul visited Jerusalem with their contributions. (12: 24, 25.)

PRACTICAL REMARKS.

1. Peter recognized the authority of the local church, and the right, not only of the apostles, but also of other brethren, to question his conduct. He certainly claimed no papal authority. (Ver. 1-4; 15: 4; 1 Peter 5: 1.)

2. The apostles and early Christians had many things to learn. So now, though revelation is complete, the Spirit may guide us from time to time to the better understanding of the truth. (Ver. 1-4; John 16: 12, 13.)

3. The way to meet and disarm prejudice is by a calm and simple statement of facts. (Ver. 4; 26: 24-26.)

4. The servant of Christ should not refuse to explain kindly and frankly to his brethren any conduct or principle, which may seem to them to be erroneous, and such explanation should be received and considered in a similar spirit. (Ver. 4-17; 1 Cor. 10: 32, 33; 11: 16.)

5. Peter gives a beautiful example of humility both at Caesarea and Jerusalem. (Ver. 4-17; 1 Peter 3: 15, 16.)

6. We should seek and highly esteem the approval of brethren of good judgment and acknowledged integrity. (Ver. 12; 1 Cor. 16: 3.)

7. We should prayerfully seek and follow the guidance of the Spirit and providence in our work. (Ver. 12; 1 Peter 4: 6.)

8. God has appointed the preaching of the gospel as a means unto salvation. (Ver. 14; Rom. 10: 14; 1 Cor. 1: 18.)

9. The presence and enjoyment of the Holy Spirit is an evidence of a new life. (Ver. 15-17; 1 Cor. 3: 16.)

10. As the newly born believer is to receive water baptism so the newly born church received the baptism in the Spirit. (Ver. 16; 3: 4; 10: 44-46.)

11. It is our privilege to enjoy the blessing resulting from the Spirit baptism of the early church. (Ver. 15, 16; Rom. 8: 9-11; John 14: 16.)

12. If any one gives evidence of acceptance with God he is a proper subject of baptism. (Ver. 2: 41; Matt. 3: 8.)

13. Our theories should be subordinate to the teachings of God's word, Spirit, and providence. (Ver. 18; 1 Cor. 2: 12, 13.)

14. Nothing is of more importance, or the cause of greater gratitude, than the receiving of the word of God. (Ver. 1, 18.)

15. Any other repentance than that which is unto life is worthless. (Ver. 18; 2 Cor. 7: 10.)

16. Persecution, so far from taking away Christian courage, rather develops it. (Ver. 19; 2 Cor. 4: 8-10.)

17. "God's dispensations can only be read in the light of after developments." (DR. SCHAFF.) The martyrdom of Stephen and the persecution that followed resulted in multiplying churches, and in the formation of second a centre of early Christianity at Antioch. (Ver. 19-21; Phil. 1: 12-14.)

18. The power of God must attend the preaching of the gospel to make it successful. (Ver. 21; 1 Cor. 3: 7, 8; 1 Thess. 1: 5.)

19. Great care should be taken in sending the right persons into mission fields. (Ver. 22-24; Phil. 2: 20-22.)

20. We should rejoice when many are added to the Lord, even though the men and measures accord not exactly with our views. (Ver. 23; Phil. 1: 18.)

21. The Christian from the very beginning of his spiritual life should be fully determined, steadfast, and devoted to the Lord. (Ver. 23; 1 Cor. 15: 58.)

22. Barnabas alone in the New Testament is styled "a good man." Gospel workers should be full of the Spirit, full of faith in God and his message. (Ver. 24; 2 Tim. 2: 1-3, 15, 22-25.)

23. Good men must be sought after, who are fitted for and called to God's work. (Ver. 24; 2 Cor. 2: 12, 13; 7: 6.)

21. Preachers of the gospel when laboring together should make the glory of God and his cause uppermost. (Ver. 26; 1 Cor. 2: 2; 3: 9, 21.)

25. The noblest name that we can bear on earth is that of Christian. May we indeed share in Christ's anointing (1 John 2: 20), and at last the greater honor of receiving his "new name!" (Ver. 26; Rev. 3: 12.)

26. Like miracles and the gift of tongues, the gift of prophecy was a becoming attendant and evidence of the New Dispensation. (Ver. 27, 28; 13: 1; 1 Cor. 12: 28.)

27. The relief sent from the Christians at Antioch to their suffering brethren in Judea is one of the most beautiful incidents of the apostolic age. (Ver. 29, 30.)

28. True faith shows itself in works of love. (Ver. 29, 30; Gal. 5: 6.)

29. Let us learn the duty, the Spirit, and the principle of Christian beneficence. (Ver. 29, 30; 1 Cor. 16: 1, 2.)

30. Great care should be taken in selecting trustworthy and experienced men in managing and distributing our beneficence. (Ver. 30; 6: 3.)

Ch. 12: This chapter closes the first general division of the Acts, the account of the Jerusalem church, and the missionary operations of which it was the centre. About the time of sending the contributions from Antioch to the brethren in Judea, a new persecution arose under Herod Agrippa I. The Apostle James is slain; Peter is imprisoned, but is delivered by an angel. Then follow Herod's negotiations with the Tyrians and Sidonians, his impious vanity, and his loathsome death by the hand of an angel; after which the mother church disappears from the inspired history, increasing and prosperous.

1-19. THE SECOND PERSECUTION AT JERUSALEM. DEATH OF JAMES, AND MIRACULOUS DELIVERANCE OF PETER; A. D. 44. The disciples had enjoyed peace, and rest from persecution for five or six years. (9: 31.) Caligula's infamous conduct toward the Jews doubtless contributed to this. (See note at end of ch. 11.)

1. This chapter is closely connected with the preceding by the words, *And about that time.* Having mentioned

the mission of Barnabas and Saul to Jerusalem, Luke proceeds to describe the condition of the church there at that time. From ver. 25 it is evident that some of the events related in ver. 1-24 occurred during this visit. Some suppose that they arrived at Jerusalem at the Passover, after the martyrdom of James, and before the deliverance of Peter. But there is no evidence that they came at once to Jerusalem. (11: 29.) The first part of April was probably too early for the famine to be felt much. Their coming to Jerusalem was more likely after Herod had removed to Caesarea. (Ver. 19.) The feast of Pentecost was the most highly prized of any of the Jewish feasts by the early Christians; and Barnabas and Saul would be more likely to come to that, than to the Passover. The feast of the Tabernacles, occurring after Herod's death, would seem to be too late for their arrival. We may therefore place their coming into Judea, sometime between the Passover and Herod's death, that is, between April 1st and the first of August. **Herod the king.** Agrippa I., the grandson of Herod the Great, the great grandson of Hyrcanus the high priest, and father of Agrippa II. mentioned in chapters 25 and 26. After the murder of his father Aristobulus, he was sent to Rome to be educated, and was the companion of the princes, Caligula and Claudius. He fell into disgrace with the Emperor Tiberius, and was imprisoned toward the end of his reign, but was released by Caligula on his accession (A. D. 37), and made king of the tetrarchies of Philip and Lysanias. Subsequently the tetrarchy of Herod Antipas (Galilee and Peraea) was added to his dominions. In A. D. 41 Claudius extended his kingdom over Judea and Samaria, so that his entire dominions equalled that of his grandfather. His revenues, according to Josephus, were large, estimated as equal to two millions of dollars. He was an observer of the law, and adopted a policy to win the favor of the Jews. At the same time he was luxurious in his tastes, and delighted in theatres, games, and gladiatorial shows. He was crafty, selfish, extravagant, vainglorious, and licentious. His

Renewed persecution at Jerusalem. Death of James; miraculous deliverance of Peter.

12. NOW about that time Herod the king stretched forth *his* hands to vex certain

2 of the church. And he killed James ^a the brother of John with the sword.

3 And because he saw ^a it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. (Then were ^a the days of unleavened

^a Matt. 10 : 2.

^a ch. 24 : 27 ; 25 : 9.

^a Exod. 14-20 ; 23 : 15.

two-sided character appears in this narrative: His readiness to conciliate the Jews by persecuting Christians, and to accept the proffered deification of himself by the heathen multitude. After his death Palestine was again reduced to a Roman province; and never again were the rulers in Jerusalem able to organize a general persecution against the Christians. **To vex—to maltreat, persecute certain of the church at Jerusalem.** He was anxious to please the Jews. (ver. 3.) This accords with Josephus (*Antiq.* xix. 7 : 3). "He took delight in giving, and rejoiced in living with good reputation. He was not at all like that Herod, who reigned before him; for that Herod was ill-natured . . . and every one perceived that he was more friendly to the Greeks than to the Jews." But Agrippa "loved to live continually at Jerusalem, and was exactly careful in the observance of the laws of his country. He therefore kept himself entirely pure; nor did any day pass over his head without its appointed sacrifice."

2. James the brother of John— sons of Zebedee. (Matt. 4 : 21 ; 20 : 20-23.) They are always mentioned together in the gospels; and with Peter formed the three favorite disciples, who were permitted to witness the raising of the daughter of Jairus (Mark 5 : 37), the Transfiguration (Matt. 17 : 1) and the agony in Gethsemane. (Matt. 26 : 37.) This James must not be confounded with James, the Lord's brother. (ver. 17.) He was the first of the apostles to drink the cup that Christ drank and to undergo his baptism of sufferings; and John appears to have survived all the rest. The fact that James was chosen as the first victim of this persecution indicates that he was indeed "a son of thunder" (Mark 3 : 17), and a prominent leader in the church at Jerusalem. It seems to have been the design of Herod to destroy the leaders, believing that their followers would be disorganized and

scattered. **With the sword**—beheading him. This was regarded as a disgraceful mode of punishment among the Jews. Herod had the power of life and death since he ruled under the authority of the Romans. It has been often noticed how briefly Luke describes the death of James in contrast with that of Stephen. (7 : 55-60.) This has been variously explained; but the reasons do not appear. It would seem that James met his end calmly and silently; but it was not the will of the Spirit that the account of it should be handed down to God's people. The traditions regarding the event are worthless. Paley has noted the accuracy of Luke in the words, "Herod the king," there being no time for thirty years before or afterward, when there was a king at Jerusalem, except the last three years of Herod's life. Agrippa II. (25 : 13) did not reign over Judea.

3. When he saw that it pleased the Jews. By this we get a glimpse of Herod's character. He was crafty, and acted from State policy. That it was not from his conscientious regard for the law, is evident from his readiness soon after to receive divine honors. (ver. 23.) **The Jews** here include not the rulers only, but the people generally (ver. 11.), "people of the Jews." This indicates the popular feeling at that time. A great change had taken place in this respect since the days succeeding Pentecost (2 : 47), and the great revivals that followed. (5 : 13, 28, 42.) The church had been scattered and weakened through persecution, so that its following in Jerusalem was small in comparison to the population. **He proceeded further to take.** Literally, *He added, he went on to seize Peter also.* This is in imitation of a Hebrew idiom, which has led some to suppose that the account was written originally in Hebrew. Luke may have received such an account from Peter himself. **The days of unleavened bread—**

4 bread.) And when he had apprehended him, he put *him* in prison, and delivered *him* to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; ⁴intending after Easter to 5 bring him forth to the people. Peter therefore was kept in prison: but ⁴prayer

was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.

6 And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter ⁵was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and the keepers before

9 Prov. 19: 21; 27: 1; Lam. 3: 37; Matt. 26: 5. Cor. 1: 11; Eph. 6: 18; 1 Thess. 5: 17.

⁴ ver. 12; Matt. 18: 19; 1 Cor. 12: 26; 2 Ps. 4: 8; Isa. 26: 3, 4; Heb. 13: 6.

the festival week of the Passover, during which time no heaven was allowed in Jewish houses. (Matt. 14: 1, 12; Dent. 16: 3, 8.) This festival began on the fourteenth day of Nisan, and in A. D. 44 corresponded with the first week of April.

4. When he had, etc.—*whom having also arrested*. Herod takes every precaution to secure and hold fast his victim. Peter had been delivered once before (5: 23); Herod now intends to make it sure. He not only confined him **in prison**, but also put him in charge of **four quaternions of soldiers**, four squads consisting of four each, making sixteen soldiers in all. According to the Roman custom the night was divided into four watches, and each quaternion took one watch. Two armed men in the prison, and two before the gate, **to keep, guard**, one unarmed prisoner. **Intending after Easter**—*after the Passover*, the last day of the festival. There is no reference here to any services of the church. Indeed, Easter, as an ecclesiastical church service, was then unknown. The stricter Jews, according to the Talmud, held it unlawful and a profanation to put a person to death during the solemn feasts; and Herod wished to be regarded as a strict observer of the law. (See John 18: 28.) **To bring him forth or up to the people**—for trial and execution, in their presence as spectators. (John 19: 13.) The prison is conceived of as in a lower place. Herod intends not to amuse the people (Judg. 16: 25), but rather to display his zeal for Judaism and the law. (2 Kings 10: 16.)

5. Was kept. A contrast is here presented. While Peter *was carefully kept*, the church was earnestly praying. **Without ceasing**—rather, *earnestly*. Some manuscripts have the adjective *earnest*, others the adverb *earnestly*. The greater weight of critical evidence is with the latter. It implies intensity,

and hence persistency of supplication. It is used of our Lord's praying in Gethsemane (Luke 22: 44), and by Peter of brotherly love, "fervently." (1 Peter 1: 22.) The fact here mentioned suggests, that what followed in the deliverance of Peter was in answer to prayer. **For him, or concerning him**. That he might be delivered from prison or from the hand of Herod, or if that was not the will of the Lord, that divine grace might sustain him. He had been once delivered from prison (5: 19), and this fact would encourage them to hope for a like deliverance. But as such help did not come, and the night before the trial had arrived, they appear to have concluded (ver. 15, 16) that Peter would probably follow James in martyrdom. "Why had they not also prayed for James? Because he had been speedily slain." (BENGEL.)

6. The same night—before the day fixed for his execution. Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains. According to the Roman custom a chain was fastened to the left wrist of the soldier, and to the right wrist of the prisoner. Sometimes, as in this case, for the greater security of an important prisoner, two soldiers were chained to him one on each side of him. Compare Paul bound with two chains. (21: 33.) If these belonged to one of the quaternions of soldiers, then it must have been the last watch of the night, between three and six o'clock, when the angel entered the prison. For Peter was not missed till morning (ver. 18), showing that no change of guards had taken place after his deliverance. **And the keepers before the door kept the prison**. According to one view, two at the doors of the prison formed the first and second guards (ver. 10), the two chained to the prisoner made up the four. According to another view, two

7 the door kept the prison. And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands. And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals. And so he did.

9 And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me. And he went out, and followed him; and wist not that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought he saw a vision. 10 When they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city; which

^t ch. 5 : 19; Ps. 34 : 7.

^u Luke 2 : 9; 24 : 4.
17; 11 : 5.

^v Luke 12 : 35.
^z ch. 16 : 26.

^x Ps. 126 : 1.

^y ch. 10 : 3.

at one station, and two at another were guarding the prison, while the two chained to Peter were with him for the night. (See on ver. 10.)

7. **Behold the angel**, rather, *an angel of the Lord*. (See on 5 : 19.) The same language is used here as in Luke 2 : 9, where an angel is described as appearing to the shepherds at our Saviour's birth. This is an instructive chapter on angels. (Ver. 15, 23.) On angels in their relation to God's people, see Gen. 19 : 1; 1 Kings 19 : 5-7; 2 Kings 6 : 17; Ps. 91 : 11, 12; Dan. 3 : 25, 27; 6 : 22; 9 : 21; Acts 10 : 3; 27 : 23. **A light shined in the prison**—in the *chamber* or *cell*, in which Peter was sleeping. Not the same word as that translated *prison* above. **And smote him**, with considerable force **on his side**, in order to rouse him from sleep. **And raised him up**, awaking him. "This and the direction to gird himself, in the next verse, was to arouse Peter, to convince him that it was not a dream, and to leave in his recollection a testimony of the reality of the angelic appearance. So Christ bade his disciples to *touch* him, to satisfy themselves that he was really in bodily presence with them. (Luke 24 : 39; John 20 : 20, 27.)" (ABBOTT.) Peter, sleeping in expectation of witnessing for his Lord when the day dawned, would naturally mistake the angel's voice for the summons to execution. No wonder, as matters proceeded that it seemed to him like a dream.

8. The angel had commanded him to arise quickly (ver. 7); but now to dress himself freely and deliberately, attending to each particular. "Hesitation in arising would have argued unbelieving doubts; undue haste in departure, unbelieving fears." (ALEXANDER.) **Gird thyself**—tighten the girdle of the tunic, which he had unloosed for

sleeping. **Bind on**—strap on the sandal, soles of wood or leather underneath the feet, which he had laid aside before he slept. **Cast thy garment about thee**—thy outer garment, a kind of shawl used as a cloak by day and a covering by night. He would need this as a protection against the chilly air of an early spring morning. Thus freed from chains and all equipped, he was to **follow** the angel, leaving no article of attire behind.

9. **Wist not**. *Wist* is an old English word meaning *knew*. His liberation was so sudden, unexpected, and miraculous, that he was in a maze and bewildered. His sudden awakening from sleep naturally helped toward this result. It seemed to him more like a dream than a reality. He really **thought he saw a vision**—such as he had seen at Joppa. (10 : 11, 12; see on ver. 11.) This report of his thoughts must have come from himself.

10. **When they were past the first**, etc. More exactly, *and having passed through the first and the second watch*. Dr. Hackett remarks that "*having passed through*" suggests a plural sense of *watch* and must be said loosely, if applied to a single person. According to this view they pass through or between the two soldiers stationed at Peter's door and then through the other two stationed at the gate which led into the city. (See on ver. 6.) But according to the more common view they passed by one guard, or soldier, at the door of Peter's cell, and another at the outer gate of the prison. **The iron gate that leadeth unto the city**. Nothing can, with certainty, be inferred in regard to the position of the prison; for the iron gate may have led from the inside of the prison, and not necessarily from without the walls of the city. "De Wette, after Light-

opened to them of his own accord: and they went out, and passed on through one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him.

11 And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that

^a the Lord hath sent his angel, and ^b hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, ^c and *from* all the expectation of the 12 people of the Jews. And when he had considered *the thing*, he came to the house of Mary the mother of ^d John, whose sur-

^a Ps. 34 : 7; Dan. 3 : 28; 6 : 22; Heb. 1 : 14. ^b Ps. 33 : 18, 19; 41 : 2; 97 : 10; 2 Cor. 1 : 10; 2 Peter 2 : 9. ^c ver. 3. ^d ver. 25;

ch. 15 : 37; Col. 4 : 10; 2 Tim. 4 : 11.

foot, Walch and others, thinks that the prison was a tower between the two walls of the city, and that this was the outer gate of the tower." (HACKETT.) In *Bible Lands*, p. 450, Dr. Van Lennep thus describes the gates of an eastern city: "They are large, massive and two-leaved, built of heavy timber, plated with iron. A strong iron bar, hooked at one end, hangs from a heavy ring of the same metal, made fast in a strong post built into the wall behind each fold of the gate. When the gate is closed, the hooks are set into other iron rings on the back of its folds, enabling the gate to resist a very heavy pressure from without. The lock is massive and of wrought iron, and the long-handled, ponderous key is carried by the keeper of the gate in his belt, or hung from a nail in his little room close by." That the gate opened of its **own accord**, without any visible cause, added to the wonder of the miracle. When they had **passed on through one street** and were about to enter another the angel *disappeared* as quickly as he had appeared to him, and as silently as he had conducted him into this freedom.

11. When Peter was come to himself. Conscious where he was and that he had passed through an actual experience. Before this he had been in a dreamy state, exercising his will under the leadership of the angel, rather than independently. **Now I know of a surety.** As he stands alone in the city and notes the surroundings and sees that he is actually there and no longer in prison or chains, he is convinced of the reality of his deliverance, through the interposition of an angel *sent forth* from heaven. He views his deliverance as twofold: From the hand of Herod, who, having the civil authority and power, intended to kill him; and from all the expectation of the people of

the Jews, who, notwithstanding all the miracles he had done among them, were building high hopes upon his destruction, and the consequent disaster to Christians. The first persecution had greatly scattered and weakened the church; the second one might destroy it. But the time had not yet come for Peter to die (John 21 : 18, 19), and Christianity was to live notwithstanding all its foes. (Matt. 16 : 18.) Rationalistic interpreters have done their best to explain away the supernatural in this account. But the simplicity and freshness of the narrative commend it to the reader as honest and accurate. There is no attempt to overdo, but rather to state circumstances exactly as they were. "The event is indeed most graphically described, and exhibits no features that can embarrass any one who believes in the interposition of the living God in the real world, and who admits the actual existence and operations of the angels." (LECHLER in *Lange*.)

12. When he had considered the thing, or better, *And becoming fully conscious of it*, of the state of the case, and the actual circumstances. This accords better with the use of the word in 14 : 6; 5 : 2; 1 Cor. 4 : 4. Luke implies in the narrative that Peter acted with deliberation; and so, doubtless, he now gave some thought as to what had occurred and what he should do. **Mary, the mother of John,** etc. She is mentioned only here. She was aunt of Barnabas. (Gal. 4 : 10.) It is said that Peter came to her house, which would seem to imply that it was not from design, but that it was in the way that he was going. Her house was one of the meeting places for worship. Tradition fixes its site on the upper slope of Zion, and affirms that it was saved from the destruction of Jerusalem, A. D. 70, and was used as a church in the fourth century. She is

name was Mark; where many were gathered together praying. And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came to hearken, named Rhoda. And when she knew Peter's voice, she opened

not the gate for gladness, but ran in and told how Peter stood before the gate. And they said unto her, Thou art mad. But she constantly affirmed that it was even so. Then said they, 'It is his angel.

* ver. 5; Isa. 65 : 24; 1 John 5 : 14, 15.

† Matt. 14 : 26; 18 : 10; Mark 6 : 49.

distinguished from other Marys by being styled the *mother of John*; and it was the custom, as it still is among the Arabs, to call a father or mother after their son, especially after the eldest son. Thus Zeruiah is called Joab's mother. (2 Sam. 17 : 25; John 2 : 1.) **John, whose surname was Mark**—the former being his Hebrew name (13 : 5, 13), and the latter his Latin name. (15 : 39.) He was converted through the instrumentality of Peter (1 Peter 5 : 13), and was a cousin of Barnabas. (Col. 4 : 10.) He was doubtless the writer of Mark's gospel, which was regarded by early Christians as the gospel of Peter, Mark simply writing under the direction of Peter. **Where many were gathered together praying**—for Peter. (Ver. 5.) That they were still at prayer showed their perseverance and importunity. It was more convenient to hold their assemblies at night, and perhaps there was greater safety. (John 20 : 19.) "These nocturnal assemblies of Christians for prayer were continued in many places in more quiet times, partly owing to the solemnity which belongs to the hours of the night, partly owing to the deep-rooted persuasion that the Lord would come again during the night." (HOWSON and SPENCE.)

13. At the door of the gate—the wicket or small door in the large heavy gate. The house seems to have been of some size, and was built after the usual plan of Jewish houses, around an open court yard. **A damsel or maid servant named Rhoda**, or *Rose*, for so the name means. It was not uncommon for the Jews to give their daughters the names of plants and flowers. Thus Hadassah (Esther) means a myrtle; Susannah, a lily; and Tamer, a palm. **To hearken**—*to listen*, who is there; hence the word was used of *answering* a knock or a call at the door, and so the Revised Version translates, "a maid came to answer," and ask his name.

14. When she knew Peter's voice. Peter not only knocked but called for entrance. He had doubtless been a frequent guest at the house of Mary; and the maid had doubtless often heard him talk and pray. **She opened not the gate for gladness**—she was probably a Christian girl, and had shared the interest and anxiety of the disciples, and now wished them to be partakers of her joy. We see how Peter was loved by all classes. His sympathy for servants, and his appreciation of their trials may be learned from 1 Peter 2 : 18-20. **Told how, that Peter stood**, etc. Note her simple faith, while all others are doubting.

15. Thou art mad—you are not in your right mind. (26 : 24; John 10 : 20.) **Constantly, confidently, affirmed.** No words of theirs could shake her belief that Peter was really at the door. **It is his angel**—his guardian angel; for this accorded with the Jewish belief. It seems that these believers thought that Peter had just been put to death, and that his angel was present at the door, assuming his voice. Some would translate *messenger*; but the word is rarely used in this sense in the New Testament (Mark 1 : 2); and if so used here it would have been said, *a messenger from him*, rather than *his messenger*. Neither can we render the words, *his ghost*, or *spirit*, for the word *angel* is never used in that sense in the New Testament. Luke simply narrates what these brethren thought, but expresses no opinion upon the doctrine, neither affirming nor denying. Daniel and Zechariah speak of the angel of a particular country or nation, as of Persia, of Greece, or of the Jews. (Dan. 10 : 13, 20, 21; Zech. 5 : 5, 8.) The Jews applied the idea of guardian angel to individuals, as is illustrated in the story of Tobit. The Christian Fathers also held to guardian angels. But while the Scriptures are not against such a

16 But Peter continued knocking; and when they had opened *the door*, and saw him, 17 they were astonished. But he, ^gbeckoning unto them with the hand to hold their peace, declared unto them how ^hthe

Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, Go shew these things unto ⁱJames, and to the brethren. And he departed, and went into another place.

^g ch. 13 : 16 ; 19 : 33 ; 21 : 40.

^h Ps. 102 : 19, 20.

ⁱ ch. 15 : 13 ; James 1 : 1.

doctrine, they fail to prove it. Angels have much to do as ministering spirits in reference to our salvation (Heb. 1 : 14) ; in protecting us from danger (Ps. 91 : 11 ; Matt. 4 : 6), in being present at our worship (1 Cor. 11 : 10), and at last in separating the righteous from the wicked. (Matt. 24 : 31.) Our Lord's words (Matt. 18 : 10), "I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven," has been thought to teach that each individual has his angel; but the passage only teaches the general fact that believers as a class, and not necessarily as individuals, have angels as attendants and guardians. (See note on Matt. 18 : 10.)

16. When they had opened the door—indicating that the company, or at least several of them, had become so interested in the matter as to go to the gate, and open it. **They were astonished.** If they were praying for his deliverance, then their faith was weak. At least they were not expecting it in this way, and now. (See on ver. 5.)

17. Beckoning unto them with the hand—rapidly shaking or waving the hand with a downward movement. In the New Testament this verb is only found in the Acts, and is always used of a gesture to secure attention. (13 : 16 ; 21 : 40 ; 19 : 33.) The brethren were boisterous with joy, congratulations, and questions. Peter wished silence, in order to be heard. The narrative in this verse indicates haste. Perhaps without entering into the room where they were gathered, perhaps in the porch whither the company had mostly come, Peter makes known his deliverance, the command of the angel, and then retires. **Declared unto them**—ascribing his deliverance to the Lord Jesus Christ, through the angel. **Shew, till these things unto James**, yet not to him alone, but also to the brethren—to the pastor and church at Jerusalem. None of the apostles

appear to have been there. This James could not have been the son of Zebedee, who had been slain by Herod (ver. 2), nor does he appear to be the son of Alphaeus, but rather the Lord's brother (Gal. 1 : 19), who was a leader in the church at Jerusalem, and its pastor after the death of James, perhaps from this time when Peter thus reported to him, and them. (15 : 13 ; 21 : 18 ; Gal. 2 : 9, 12.) He was a real brother of our Lord (Mark 6 : 3, on which see note, also 1 : 14 ; 1 Cor. 9 : 5), and seems not to have believed on Christ until after the resurrection, when Jesus appeared to him. (John 7 : 5 ; 1 Cor. 15 : 5.) His close relation to Christ, his conservative Jewish views and his observance of the law, made him a fit man for the foremost place in the church at Jerusalem. His Epistle resembles the addresses of John the Baptist, and the Sermon on the Mount. He contrasts the gospel with the Law of Moses, calling it "the perfect law of liberty" (James 1 : 25), raising it thus above the imperfect law of *bondage*. In after times he was called "the Just" with reference to his conservative Jewish views. "The mission of James was evidently to stand in the breach between the synagogue and the church, and to lead the disciples of Moses gently to Christ. He was the only man that could do it in that critical time of approaching judgment of the holy city. As long as there was any hope of a conversion of the Jews as a nation, he prayed for it and made the transition as easy as possible. When the hope vanished his mission was fulfilled." (DR. SCHAEFF, *Church History*, Vol. I, p. 267.) According to Josephus he was put to death by stoning, at the instigation of Ananias the high priest, of the sect of the Sadducees, A. D. 63, between the procuratorship of Festus (25 : 1) and that of Albinus. This caused great indignation among the Pharisees and resulted in the deposing of Ananias. (Josephus, *Antiq.* xx. 9 : 1.) A later

18 Now as soon as it was day, there was no small stir among the soldiers, what 19 was become of Peter. And when Herod had sought for him, and found him not, he

^k examined the keepers, and commanded that *they* should be put to death. And he went down from Judæa to Cæsarea, and *there* abode.

^k ch. 4 : 9 ; Luke 23 : 14.

account of the death of James is not so reliable.

Went into another place. The expression is indefinite, and may mean that Peter went to some place of safety either in the city or out of it. To have mentioned the place at the time of Luke's writing, might have exposed certain ones to danger. But it might have been unknown to Luke, as it was not the design of the Spirit that he should narrate further Peter's personal history. He probably left the city then, or soon after, as vigorous efforts would be made to capture and destroy him. We find him again in the city at the time of the council, about six years later (15 : 7), and a little later at Antioch. (Gal. 2 : 11-14.) He may also have preached the gospel in Greece as far as Corinth (1 Cor. 1 : 12), accompanied by his wife. (1 Cor. 9 : 5.) He also preached in the East, going as far as Babylon. (1 Peter 5 : 13.) Roman Catholic writers and some others suppose that Peter went from Jerusalem at this time to Rome, as an apostle to the circumcision. But this is without historical evidence. "It is entirely adverse to this view that Paul makes no allusion to Peter in his Epistle to the Romans, but writes with a tone of authority which his avowed policy, his spirit of independence (2 Cor. 10 : 16), would not have suffered him to employ had it belonged more properly to some other apostle to instruct and guide the Roman church." (HACKETT.) It is not certain that Peter ever visited Rome. It is related that he was crucified with his head downward, at his own request, feeling that he was unworthy to die in the posture of his Lord whom he had denied. Tradition associates his martyrdom with that of Paul, about A. D. 67. But see closing note on 28 : 31.

18. As soon as it was day—between five and six o'clock of an April morning. Then Peter must have been delivered after three o'clock, if the sol-

diers to whom he was bound was changed at the end of each watch. If they were not changed then his deliverance may be assigned to about midnight (16 : 25), and more time could be allowed for his visit at the house of Mary and his departure to another place ; and in the light of this verse the latter seems the more plausible view. (See on ver. 6.) **No small stir**—*no small commotion* (19 : 23), excitement bordering on consternation. The soldiers were responsible for the prisoner, and feared the vengeance of the king ; for they were liable to suffer the punishment which he was to receive. **What was become of Peter.** They could give no solution of his escape, or of where he was, and no plausible excuse for themselves.

19. The first thing Herod does upon hearing of Peter's escape, is to make diligent search for him, in the city and in those places where he might be found, but with no results. Then he **examined the keepers, the guards**—he subjected them to trial, ascertaining the probable time of Peter's escape, and what soldiers were then in charge. It is thus not necessary to suppose that all the sixteen soldiers were put to death, unless he thought all guilty of conniving at Peter's escape. **Commanded that they should be put to death**—or *led away to execution*. This was in accordance with Roman law. It was doubtless evident that the guard were asleep, a capital offence, in Roman soldiers. (16 : 27 ; Matt. 28 : 14.) But while the fierce anger of Herod was appeased in the death of the soldiers, his bitter disappointment in being unable to meet the expectation of the Jews was not satisfied. He had been residing about three years at Jerusalem, but in chagrin he leaves **Judæa** and goes down to **Cæsarea** (8 : 40), which became his residence till his death not long after. Josephus says that he went thither for the purpose of celebrating games in honor of the

Death of Herod Agrippa.

20 AND Herod was highly displeased with them of Tyre and Sidon: but they came

with one accord to him, and, having made Blastus the king's chamberlain their friend, desired peace; because their

¹ Prov. 17 : 14 ; Eccl. 10 : 4.

^m 1 Kings 5 : 9-11 ; Ezra 3 : 7 ; Ezek. 27 : 2, 17.

Emperor, Claudius Caesar. (Josephus *Antiq.* xix. 8, 2.) This is entirely consistent with Luke's account. Herod, ashamed of his failure in reference to Peter, was glad of a pretext to go to Caesarea, and when there he was willing to remain.

20-25. DEATH OF HEROD AGRIPPA I. BARNABAS AND SAUL RETURN TO ANTIOCH. (2 Cor. 12 : 2-4.) The death of Herod is one of the most important chronological events recorded in the Acts, because the time of its occurrence can be fixed very accurately. According to Josephus (*Antiq.* xix. 5, 1), Herod received of Claudius, on his accession (January A. D. 41), the addition of Judea and Samaria to his kingdom; and at the time of his death he had completed three years after this increase of power. This fixes his death in A. D. 44, sometime after the passover. Various conjectures have been made regarding the festival which Josephus says Herod went to Caesarea to celebrate. (See on ver. 19.) Some suppose it was in honor of the Emperor's safe return from Britain, which was early in A. D. 44; and as it would take some little time for the news to reach Jerusalem, such a celebration could have taken place early or late in May, before or after the Pentecost. Others think it in honor of the birthday of Claudius, August first. Wieseler shows that quite probably it was the festival of the Quinquennialia, observed on the same day of the same month in honor of Augustus, whose name the month had received. This settles at least the year of the martyrdom of James, the deliverance of Peter, and the return of Paul to Antioch from his second visit to Jerusalem. (Compare *Harmonic Arrangement of the Acts*, note on § 24.)

20. Luke proceeds to show how God defeated the purpose of Herod, he dying ignominiously, while the church continues to prosper. **Highly displeased**, exasperated, exceedingly hostile. The original might mean that

Herod was engaged in actual hostilities. But this could not have been the case, for Tyre and Sidon were in the Roman Empire, and the Romans did not permit open war between dependents. Hostile feelings arose very probably out of the commercial rivalry which existed between these Phœnician ports and the newly built harbor of Caesarea. Nothing more is known of this quarrel since secular history makes no mention of it. **Them of Tyre and Sidon**—the *Tyrians and Sidonians*. Tyre and Sidon were the two great cities of Phœnicia, noted for their commerce, and especially dependent on Palestine for their supplies, with which mutual relations appear to have existed from the time of Solomon. (1 Kings 5 : 11 ; Ezra 3 : 7 ; Ezek. 27 : 1, 8, 17. See on 11 : 19.)

Blastus, the king's chamberlain—the officer who was over the king's bed-chamber. As the name implies, he had charge of his master's sleeping apartments, and bore a very close relation to his person. Originally the office was held by slaves, but in later times often by persons of rank. He introduced visitors to the king, and was a confidential adviser. The name *Blastus* indicates that he was not a Jew, but rather a Greek or Roman. Herod had resided at Rome, and hence he may have chosen Romans for the principal positions of his court. **Having made Blastus their friend**, having persuaded him to be, these Phœnicians could easily reach the heart of Herod. Probably their persuasions were mostly by arguments and perhaps partly by bribery. **Desired peace**—asked peace for themselves, as a favor or gift. The original word signifies to ask for something to be given, making prominent the thing asked. (THAYER, *Lex.*) What they wanted was peace, and this not as a reward, or a purchase, but as a gift, which he could graciously grant. **Because** introduces the reason why they thus anxiously sought peace at the hand of Herod. **Their country was**

country was nourished by the king's
21 *country*. And upon a set day Herod,
arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his
throne, and made an oration unto them.
22 And the people gave a shout, *saying*, "It

is the voice of a god, and not of a man.
23 And immediately the angel of the Lord
smote him, because he gave not God
the glory: and he was eaten of worms,
and gave up the ghost.

• Dan. 6 : 7. • 1 Sam. 25 : 38 ; 2 Sam. 24 : 17. P Ps. 115 : 1. q 2 Chron. 21 : 18, 19.

nourished by the kings—supplied with grain and food in exchange for their merchandise. Herod could forbid all trade between the countries and could make Cesarea the great port for merchandise. Perhaps he had done it or was about to do it. Probably, also, the great famine predicted in 11 : 23 was beginning to be felt in Phœnicia and Palestine.

21. Upon a set day—appointed for the purpose of making public answer in regard to his favor to the Tyrians and Sidonians. According to Josephus it was the second day of the public games, in honor to the Emperor Claudius, probably August first. (See above.) **Arrayed in royal apparel**—not a single garment, but the whole costume. This is in harmony with Herod's known vanity and fondness for display. Josephus describes it as a magnificent dress of silver tissue, which glistened in the sun and dazzled the eyes of beholders. **Sat upon his throne**—his tribunal, which was a platform, or throne-like seat in the theatre at Cesarea, where Josephus says that the meeting here described was held. **Made an oration**—*spoke publicly to them*, to the Phœnicians, in the hearing of the people. While the speech was to the former, Herod intended it should be heard by the latter.

22. The people—the word thus translated is found in the New Testament only in the Acts. In classic Greek it denotes the people as organized into a body politic, but in its Biblical use it refers rather to the people of a heathen city. (17 : 5 ; 19 : 30, 33.) Another word is used for the chosen people of Israel. (Ver. 4, 11.) **The voice of a God and not of a man**. The assembled people were mostly Gentiles and idolaters, for Cesarea was largely a Gentile city, and the heathen games would not be much attended by Jews. The Greeks and Romans had deified many of their dead heroes, but in these

days the people had so degenerated as to deify the living. Caligula had claimed and received honors as a god. Notice that Peter at Cesarea refuses to receive the homage of Cornelius (10 : 26), but later Herod at Cesarea approvingly receives deification from the multitude. **Gave a shout**—*shouted from all parts* again and again. It may have been started by the Phœnician ambassadors, upon their receiving a favorable reply to their request, and caught up by the people. Josephus' account is feeble and omits all reference to the address, which is perfectly natural, since he omits reference to the quarrel between Herod and the Phœnicians. Josephus states that the people cried out: "Be propitious! For although we have hitherto revered thee only as a man, yet henceforth we acknowledge thee as superior to mortal nature." And also says that the king neither rebuked nor rejected their impious flattery. The two accounts do not contradict, but rather supplement each other.

23. At once the angel of the Lord smote him—invisibly, inflicting upon him the divine judgment. Some regard this phrase as equivalent to "a stroke of Providence," or as a Jewish phrase (Ps. 78 : 49) signifying that he was suddenly seized with this disorder. But it seems that we are told here, what we could not have known except by divine inspiration, of the real, though invisible agency of a celestial spirit; and that it was inflicted upon him at this time, **because he gave not God the glory**. Angels are indicated as ministers of God's judgments in Gen. 3 : 24 ; 2 Sam. 24 : 16 ; 2 Kings 19 : 35 ; Rev. 8 : 6 f. **And he was eaten of worms**. It is implied that his death was not immediate, but through the disease which was developed at that time. Josephus states that it began in his bowels and after five days of intense suffering, he died, in the fifty-fourth year of his age, in

24 But ^{the word of God} grew and multi-
25 plied. And Barnabas and Saul returned
from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled

their ^{ministry}, and ^{took with them}
John, whose surname was Mark.

r ch. 6 : 7 ; 19 : 20 ; Isa. 55 : 11 ; Col. 1 : 6 ; 2 Thess. 3 : 1. * ch. 11 : 29, 30. † ch. 13 : 5, 13 ; 15 : 37.

the seventh year of his reign, which was the fourth year of his reign over the whole of Palestine. His malady was similar to *Trichiniasis*, a disease produced by the presence of minute worms in the muscles, introduced by the eating of meat insufficiently cooked containing their germs. It is marked by fever, great pain, and typhoid symptoms. These worms multiply into millions, generally producing death. It is useless to theorise as to how the disease at this time was produced and developed. It is enough to know that both Luke and Josephus are in accord in regard to the general facts. The difference between Josephus and Luke is much in favor of the latter. Josephus relates an incident of a heathenish and superstitious source, that the king saw an owl sitting on a rope above his head, and regarded it, according to a prediction formerly received at Rome from a German, as a herald of death, whereupon the severe pains followed. Luke, having traced things accurately, omits all that is fabulous, and states the time, occasion, cause, and nature of the disease. Josephus, wishing, doubtless, to spare the memory of Herod and the feelings of his children or friends, relates the incidents in a softened and general way ; while Luke, with the carefulness of a physician, and for the good of God's people, for the honor of truth and the glory of God, briefly, but strikingly, records the matter just as it was. A similar death is said to have befallen Antiochus Epiphanes, a bitter persecutor of the Jews ; Herod, the Great ; Pheretima, Queen of Cyrene, notorious for her cruelty ; the Emperor Galerius, the persecutor of Christians ; and Philip II., king of Spain.

24. But notwithstanding the persecution of Christians, and in contrast to the terrible death of the persecutor, **the word of God**, or according to some of the oldest manuscripts, *of the Lord grew*, in extent and power, **and multiplied** by the addition of converts.

This verse covers the intervening time between the slaying of James (ver. 1, 2) and the return of Barnabas and Saul to Antioch. These brethren contributed much by their sympathy, gifts, and personal labors to the strengthening and growth of the church. Persecutions also drove the disciples to God in prayer, and resulted in the increase of their faith and their allegiance to Christ. The miraculous deliverance of Peter from prison, and the striking judgment of God upon the blasphemous Herod tended to stimulate their courage. All these events occurring within a space of three or four months resulted, in connection with the preaching of the gospel and the presence of the Holy Spirit, in increasing the piety and activities of believers and the number of the saved.

25. Having stated the condition of the Jerusalem church, and the judgment of God upon the persecutors, Luke resumes the narrative of 11 : 30, and completes the account of the benevolent mission of Paul and Barnabas. With this verse ends the first great division of the Acts, containing the organizing, growth, and missionary operations of the church at Jerusalem, resulting in extending the gospel among Jews both in and out of Palestine, in beginning the work among Gentiles, and in organizing at Antioch, a second great centre of evangelization, especially among the heathen.

Returned from Jerusalem—many ancient authorities read to *Jerusalem*. This is a perplexing variation. Westcott and Hort prefer the latter reading, which makes the construction difficult. But some copyist might have introduced it, desiring to make the fact clear that Barnabas and Saul did actually visit Jerusalem at this time. But with either reading there can be no doubt of this. For if they returned from Jerusalem they must have been there previously. If they returned to Jerusalem from Antioch, then Luke

states the accomplishment of their journey thither, implied in 11 : 30. Or if we render rather freely : " Barnabas and Saul returned, having fulfilled their ministration in Jerusalem," the idea of place is the same. From the narrative it is evident that they visited other places in Judea, and came to Jerusalem before going home; but whether it was the last point of departure is uncertain.

Fulfilled their ministry—*performed the service*, the distribution of gifts committed to them. Notice that Luke still names Barnabas first; Saul was not yet famous, and publicly and divinely recognized as an apostle to the Gentiles. (13 : 9, 10.) **Took with them John, whose surname was Mark.** (See on ver. 12.)

The implication is that Barnabas and Saul had been guests at the house of Mary, and had met the brethren, in their gatherings for worship. It is also implied that their visit to Jerusalem was about the time of Herod's death, and it seems natural to fix their return to Antioch a little after that event. It is not needful to suppose that they stayed long at Jerusalem, or that they spent much time in visiting other places in Judea. We may therefore place this return to Antioch in the latter part of A. D. 44. This was Saul's second visit to Jerusalem after his conversion. (See on 11 : 30.) It is probable that during this visit he experienced that wonderful rapture or trance recorded in 2 Cor. 12 : 1-4. The date of the second epistle to the Corinthians is fixed at A. D. 57. Counting backward "fourteen years," according to the Jewish mode of reckoning we have A. D. 44, as the year of its occurrence. Perhaps it was in the temple like an earlier vision. (22 : 17.) It was fitting, just before the enlarging of his sphere of usefulness, and his going forth on his mission to the Gentiles.

PRACTICAL REMARKS.

1. This chapter illustrates the final triumph of the righteous, and the sure and final overthrow of the wicked. (Ver. 1-25; Prov. 10 : 25; Isa. 3 : 10, 11.)

2. The death of James teaches us that the true test of discipleship is found, not in the manner of their death, but in the spirit of their life. (Ver. 1; John 21 : 22.)

3. The enmity of the human heart to truth and holiness will show itself sooner or later. (Ver. 1, 2; Rom. 8 : 7; 2 Tim. 3 : 12.)

4. Expediency rather than truth has generally regulated human governments in their treatment of religion. (Ver. 3; 24 : 23, 26, 27; Matt. 2 : 7, 8.)

5. Note the providence of God in regard to Peter. He is not slain at once, but is kept for a public trial and execution, and thus time is afforded for prayer and his release. (Ver. 4.)

6. The prayer of faith is effectual, and stronger than kings and soldiers. (Ver. 5-9; 1 Kings 18 : 36-40; James 5 : 17, 18.)

7. If a man has the testimony of a good conscience, and a lively hope of immortality, he can calmly face the rack and flames. (Ver. 6; 21 : 13; 2 Tim. 4 : 6.)

8. God can with the utmost ease touch the hidden springs of human affairs, and rescue his people. (Ver. 7; 16 : 26.)

9. They who follow the light of Christ will find that obstacles, darkness, and every difficulty, will disappear before them. (Ver. 8, 9; John 8 : 12; Ps. 36 : 9.)

10. We are not to expect God to do for us that which we can do for ourselves. Special divine assistance will continue no longer than necessary. (Ver. 10; 27 : 23, 24, 38, 43, 44.)

11. The interpositions of Providence often seem like a dream, and divine deliverance appears real only after it has occurred. (Ver. 9, 11; Ps. 126 : 1.)

12. As long as there is life we can hope and pray; and even where human hope fails, God may interpose in answer to prayer. (Ver. 12; 2 Sam. 12 : 22, 23.)

13. Rhoda filled her place faithfully doing what she could, and her name with that of Peter is handed down to future generations. (Ver. 12, 13; Ps. 84 : 10.) "They also serve who only stand and wait." (MILTON.)

14. How our weak faith contrasts with the greatness of God's blessing, and his readiness to deliver. (Ver. 15, 16; Mark 9 : 24.)

15. Angels have a ministry of blessing in reference to God's people. (Ver. 7, 15; Ps. 34 : 7; 2 Kings 6 : 17.)

16. Christians are often astonished to see how abundantly God answers prayer. (Ver. 16; Eph. 3 : 20.)

17. Our first thought after deliverances should be to ascribe praise to God for his

Barnabas and Saul sent as missionaries to the heathen. Their work in Cyprus.

13 NOW there were ^uin the church that

^u ch. 11 : 27 ; 15 : 35. ^x ch. 4 : 36 ; 11 : 22-26. ^y Rom. 16 : 21.

glory and the good of others. (Ver. 17 ; Ps. 66 : 16.)

18. When Christians rejoice their enemies are troubled. (Ver. 18, 19 ; 4 : 13, 21, 24.)

19. How often does the path of worldly pleasure and ambition end suddenly in humiliation and death ! Herod goes to Cesarea, not merely for games but for death. (Ver. 19 ; Dan. 5 : 23, 30.)

20. Sinners will employ becoming means for food and worldly comforts, which they are unwilling to use for God and salvation. (Ver. 20.)

21. An individual may think he is ascending a throne when he is mounting a scaffold. (Ver. 21 ; 1 Sam. 4 : 18 ; Esth. 7 : 10.)

22. God is especially jealous of his glory. (Ver. 22, 23 ; Isa. 42 : 8.)

23. Angels are not merely agents of blessing, but also ministers of God's judgments. (Ver. 23 ; Ps. 35 : 6.)

24. God will make inquiry after blood, and will bring swift judgment upon the incorrigible. (Ver. 2, 23 ; Gen. 4 : 10 ; Ps. 9 : 12.)

25. Though the leaders of God's people fall or retire, others are raised up, and the work of God goes on. (Ver. 24, 25.)

Ch. 13 : The first great movement, especially among the Jews, at Jerusalem and outward as far as Antioch, under the leadership of Peter and the apostles, is recorded in the previous twelve chapters. With this chapter begins the second great division of the book, extending to its close, in which is narrated the great missionary movement from Antioch among Gentiles, under the leadership of Paul, till he is left a prisoner, preaching at Rome. This and the next chapter relate his first missionary journey to Cyprus, Pisidia, and Lycaonia.

1-12. BARNABAS AND SAUL SENT TO PREACH TO THE HEATHEN. THEIR LABORS IN CYPRUS. The last verse of the previous chapter forms a connecting link between that chapter and this. We may therefore place this mission, not long after the return of Barnabas and Saul to Antioch, but

was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers ; as ^x Barnabas and Simeon that was called Niger, and ^y Lucius of Cyrene,

probably in the spring, A. D. 45. (See on 12 : 25.)

1. Now, etc. *And there were at Antioch*—implying a previous account, yet beginning a new account. On *Antioch*, see on 11 : 19. **In the church, etc.** *In the church that existed there* ; showing that there was a regular organized church at Antioch, and implying with the previous narrative and with what follows, that it had attained a large membership and also great importance. The word **certain** should be omitted according to the highest critical authorities. Not a part but all the prophets and teachers in the Antioch church are given : **Barnabas**, etc., omitting **as**. **Prophets**—inspired teachers. (See on 11 : 27.) **Teachers**—*instructors*. All prophets were teachers, but all teachers were not prophets. Both classes are mentioned in Eph. 4 : 11 ; 1 Cor. 12 : 28 ; Rom. 12 : 6-8. In the apostolic churches certain persons were endowed with supernatural gifts. See 1 Cor. 12 : 4-11, 27-31, where Paul speaks of them at length. But after apostolic days, when Christianity was grounded in all needful evidence, these supernatural powers appear to have ceased. This is the only place in the Acts where *teachers* are mentioned. It does not appear, either here or elsewhere in the New Testament, that this name designated a distinct church office, but rather that it was indicative of the work which individual believers performed, who in religious assemblies of Christians undertook the work of instruction. (James 3 : 1.) See Scripture references above. Who were prophets and who teachers, among the persons named, cannot be definitely ascertained. In the original, the names are arranged somewhat thus : Both Barnabas and Simeon and Lucius ; also Manen and Saul ; hence Meyer infers that the first three were prophets, and the last two teachers. But this is not certain. For the three first may refer to those who had been long in the work at Antioch ; and the

and Manaen, which had been brought up
2 with ^a Herod the tetrarch, and ^a Saul. As

they ministered to the Lord, ^b and fasted,
the Holy Spirit said, ^c Separate me Bar-

^a Matt. 14 : 1-10.

^a ch. 11 : 25, 26.

^b Dan. 9 : 3 ; 1 Cor. 7 : 5 ; 9 : 27.

^c ch. 9 : 15 ; 22 : 21 ;

Num. 8 : 11-14 ; Rom. 1 : 1 ; Gal. 2 : 8, 9.

two last to those who had been there a shorter time ; which view answers well to Barnabas and Saul respectively. Barnabas having been long at Antioch may have acted as pastor of the church ; and some, or all of the others, may have labored with him as co-pastors, in reality though not in name. See 20 : 17, where we learn that the church at Ephesus had a plurality of pastors. The prophets who came from Jerusalem (11 : 27) were probably not the ones mentioned here, since those very likely returned to Jerusalem, but these were more permanently at Antioch.

Barnabas. (See on 4 : 36 and 11 : 22.)

Simeon that was called Niger—to distinguish him perhaps from Simon Peter, Simon and Simeon being the same name. (15 : 14.) *Niger* means **black**, and it is possible that he was an African convert, perhaps Simeon of Cyrene. (Matt. 27 : 32.) Yet Niger was a familiar Roman name, and an inference cannot be certainly drawn from its meaning. **Lucius of Cyrene**—Nothing further is known of this one, except that he may be the person mentioned by Paul as his kinsman. (Rom. 16 : 21.) He was not Luke, the writer of the Gospel and the Acts, for though the names are similar, they are not the same. Cyrene, a province and seaport of Northern Africa. (See on 2 : 10.)

Manaen—the same as Menahem. (2 Kings 15 : 14.) **Which had been brought up with Herod**—nurtured with him from infancy, as his *foster-brother*. From this it would appear, that the mother of Manaen was the nurse of Herod Antipas, who put John the Baptist to death. It was also the custom of persons of high rank to associate other children with their own in pastimes and studies. According to Josephus (*Antiq.* 15. 10. 5) an Essene, named Manaen saluted the boy who afterward became Herod the Great ; as the future king of the Jews. This Herod when he became king remembered, and held Manaen and the Essenes in high honor. Possibly he transferred his favor to his

son or grandson who was nursed and educated with the king's son. **Saul**—mentioned last, perhaps because he was the last of these prophets and teachers to come to Antioch. His apostolic character too was probably not yet made known to the church. In his humility, on account of his former persecutions of the church, he may too, have preferred a retired and undistinguished place among his fellow laborers. (Eph. 3 : 8.)

2. As they ministered. In classic Greek the verb is used of public and official services, such as at festivals and games, and religious embassies to the oracles. In the Septuagint it is used of services of the priests and Levites in the tabernacle and temple (Exod. 29 : 30-31 ; 1 Chron. 15 : 16 ; 2 Chron. 29 : 30 ; Joel 1 : 9), which is its use in Heb. 10 : 11. In Rom. 15 : 27 it is used of beneficent service in temporal things. Here it plainly refers to the general religious services of prayer, exhortation, praise, and song, including the breaking of bread, or the Lord's Supper. They were *performing service to the Lord* ; not the five prophets and teachers alone, but also the church with them. In connection with this service they were *fasting*, not as a stated service, but as an aid to prayer (10 : 30 ; 14 : 23), with special reference no doubt to the spread of the gospel, perhaps also to missionary work in other regions. No argument can here be deduced for *the mass*, or for *liturgical services*, because our word *liturgy* is derived from the Greek word here translated *ministered*. There is no trace of a liturgy in apostolic days. **The Holy Spirit said**—to the church, including the above prophets and teachers. This may be inferred from the fact that the believers were worshipping and fasting, and that Paul and Barnabas on their return from their missionary work report to the church. (14 : 26, 27.) This accords also with the previous custom of the church in choosing an apostle (1 : 23), and the seven deacons. (6 : 5.) **The Holy Spirit said**—probably through one of the prophets,

nabas and Saul for the work ^e whereunto
3 I have called them. And ^f when they had

fasted and prayed, and laid *their hands*
on them, they sent *them* away.

^e Rom. 10: 15; Eph. 3: 7, 8; 1 Tim. 2: 7; Heb. 5: 4. ^f ch. 6: 6.

or in a voice audible to all. **Separate.** The verb means to *set apart*, to a special work or service. Paul uses it in reference to himself and his work in Rom. 1: 1, and Gal. 1: 15. **Me—for me**, for my service. Here we have a proof of the divinity of the Holy Spirit. "He does not say, Separate Barnabas and Saul to the Lord, but to *me* for the ministry to which *I* have called them, showing that he is co-equal with God." (CHRYSOSTOM.) **I have called them**—implying that they had had a previous call. Saul had been called at his conversion and later at Jerusalem to the Gentile work (9: 15; 22: 21); and Barnabas had been led by the providence of God and the Spirit to this work at Antioch. (11: 23.) The discussions, the last speech, and the death of Stephen had left their undying impress on Saul's mind (6: 10; 7: 58); and taking up his enlarging spiritual conceptions of truth, he must have gotten fresh views of his own individual duty and of these prophecies which relate to the Gentile world. (Zeph. 2: 11; Gen. 12: 3; Isa. 52: 10; 60: 3, 9.) The Church doubtless knew something of these experiences and the consequent feelings of duty, but probably did not comprehend the apostleship of Paul, and the greatness of his work. See the preceding verse.

3. When they had fasted and prayed—not the fasting of the preceding verse, but another with special reference to setting apart and sending away Barnabas and Saul to their missionary work. Fasting was an aid to prayer in seeking divine guidance in this important service. It seems to have been spontaneous on their part, and was therefore appropriate. Jesus fasted before his temptation in the wilderness, and foretold that his disciples should fast. (Matt. 9: 15.) That he commanded it is doubtful, for Matt. 17: 21 and the words "and fasting" in Mark 9: 29, are omitted as glosses by the latest textual critics; as also is "fasting" in Paul's injunction in 1 Cor. 7: 5. Jesus, however, gave direction as to the proper manner of fasting in Matt. 6:

16-18. **Laid their hands upon them**—the three other prophets and teachers, perhaps others, as representatives of the church and of Christ its Head, laid their hands upon Barnabas and Saul. In thus doing they conferred no new grace or power, but recognized publicly their call to their work, giving it their sanction, approval, and prayers. Notice that the laying on of hands was generally connected with prayer. (See on 8: 17.) But why did they lay on their hands? Not to ordain them to the ministry; for both Barnabas and Saul had been successful preachers for several years. Nor was it to set them apart and elevate them to the apostolic office, for they had no authority to do this; and besides, Paul asserts that his apostleship was not from men, nor through man, and that he received it from Christ himself at his conversion. (Gal. 1: 17; 1 Cor. 15: 8-10.) There is no evidence that any of the apostles were ordained by the imposition of hands. (1: 26.) Besides, Barnabas is never called an apostle alone, and only twice when associated with Paul (14: 4, 14) very probably for the sake of brevity. The narrative that follows affords the true answer. They were set apart as missionaries to the Gentiles, or heathen. This was the work to which the Holy Spirit called them. **They sent them away**—that is, the church, and the brethren in general, who commended them to the grace of God. (14: 26; 15: 40.) As Peter and John had been sent by the church at Jerusalem to Samaria (8: 14), and as Peter and the disciples had gone forth preaching the gospel to Jews, so now, under divine direction, the church at Antioch sent forth two missionaries to the heathen.

4. So then—they themselves therefore being sent forth by the Holy Spirit, specially and authoritatively as above described; although approved, and commended by their associates and brethren of the church, who could be said to send them forth only in a subordinate sense. **Departed—came down** from Antioch unto Seleucia, the

4 So they, being sent forth by the Holy Spirit, departed unto Seleucia; and from 5 thence they sailed to Cyprus. And when

they were at Salamis, ^hthey preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. And they had also ⁱJohn to *their*

^g ch. 4 : 36. ^h ver. 46.

ⁱ ch. 12 : 25 ; 15 : 37.

seaport of that city fifteen miles away, on the Mediterranean, near the mouth of the river Orontes. Thus westward began the first great missionary tour of the Apostle Paul, probably, A. D. 45. "Next to the labors of our Lord, no movements have been so important for the race as that of Abraham westward from Ur of the Chaldees carrying the revelation of the One God and the promise of Israel, and that of Paul, also westward, carrying the revelation of Christ." (HOWSON AND SPENCE.)

From thence they sailed to Cyprus—a beautiful island about one hundred and fifty miles long and fifty miles wide, and about sixty miles from Seleucia. It became a Roman province in B. C. 58; and contained a number of populous and wealthy cities. It was very natural for Barnabas and Saul to make Cyprus their first field of missionary labor. It was the first country they would reach; its mountains could be seen from Seleucia and the Syrian coast; it was the native land of Barnabas and perhaps of John Mark (next verse); and about half of its population consisted of Jews, whose synagogues would afford them a channel for reaching the Gentiles. They might have gone to Tarsus, but Saul had already preached in Cilicia. But most of all we must believe, that those who were thus sent forth by the Spirit were also directed by the Spirit, to enter upon this field.

5. When they were at Salamis—the chief commercial city, on the eastern side of the island, and the nearest port to Seleucia, having a good harbor. It was afterward ruined by an earthquake under Constantine, and rebuilt and called Constantia. The modern *Tamagousta* is near its ruins. **Synagogues**—assemblies, also applied to the building where these solemn Jewish assemblies were held. (See on 6 : 9.) That there were a number of synagogues indicates that the Jews were numerous at Salamis. This accords with ancient testimony, that the numbers of Jews

were so great in Cyprus, that in the reign of Trajan (A. D. 116), they rose and massacred two hundred and forty thousand of the native inhabitants. On account of this, Hadrian either destroyed or expelled the whole Jewish population from the island. **They preached . . . in the synagogues**—this was their custom wherever they went; first to the Jews, and upon their rejection of the gospel, then to the Gentiles. (Ver. 46; 17 : 2; 18 : 4; Rom. 1 : 16.) In the apostolic age the Jews had their synagogue wherever they settled, or at least a place of prayer in a private house, or in the open air, usually near a river or the seashore on account of ceremonial ablutions. (16 : 13; 15 : 21.) Their advantage to early Christianity can hardly be overestimated. Wherever the early preachers went they found in them "a pulpit and an audience." They were evidently one of the preparations of Providence for the spread of the gospel. **John to—for—their minister, or assistant.** This was John Mark, the writer of the second Gospel. (See on 12 : 12.) The word translated *minister*, with reference to religious service in the New Testament, is used of the attendant or subordinate officers of the synagogue (Luke 4 : 20), and three times of the ministers or servants of Christ. (Luke 1 : 2; Acts 26 : 16; 1 Cor. 4 : 1.) Elsewhere in the New Testament it is used of servants or subordinate officers of the high priests, whose duties were rather civil than religious. (5 : 22; Matt. 26 : 58.) Expositors are not agreed as to the peculiar *duties of Mark*. He evidently held a subordinate position. Some supposed that he performed external service, having care of the party, thus giving Barnabas and Saul more time to preach. Dr. Hackett thinks it most natural to suppose that he assisted them in preaching the word. Why may he not have aided them generally, both in external duties and religious services, and also sometimes as their amanuensis? He may also have baptized converts, a rite which Paul seldom administered. (1 Cor. 1 : 14.) How

6 ^k minister. And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found
 7 ^l a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew,
 7 whose name was Bar-jesus; which was

with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear
 8 the word of God. But ^m Elymas the sor-

^k Exod. 24 : 13.

^l ch. 8 : 9 ; Deut. 18 : 10.

^m Exod. 7 : 11 ; 2 Tim. 3 : 8.

long they remained at Salamis, and with what results, we are not told. The largeness of the city and the opportunities of preaching the gospel in the several synagogues, lead us to suppose that they spent some time there.

6. When they had gone through the isle—according to the oldest and best manuscripts, *through the whole island*, indicating, not only that they traveled the whole length from Salamis to Paphos, but also that they preached quite extensively, occupying not improbably several months. There had been Christians in Cyprus before this (11 : 19, 20), and other congregations were now without doubt gathered. So large and important was the field that when Paul and Barnabas separated, the latter chose Cyprus, taking with him Mark. (15 : 36-39.) **Paphos** was on the western coast of the island, one hundred miles from Salamis, with which it was connected by a road. New Paphos is here intended; it was then the Roman capital of the province, and the residence of the governor, who was called the proconsul. Old Paphos, where the famous temple of Venus stood, was a few miles south, and noted for its licentious worship. **A certain sorcerer**, who practiced magic arts. (See on ver. 8 ; 9.) He was not like Simon Magus, a heathen magician, but **a Jew, a false prophet**, a soothsayer and fortune teller, who pretended to be inspired of God. He had a Hebrew name, **Bar-jesus**, which means, *Son of Joshua*. His professional name was *Elymas* (ver. 8), one *wise* or *powerful* in secret wisdom. The statement that he was apparently residing with the governor, and esteemed by him, is in harmony with the sceptical and superstitious character of the times. "All the Greek and Roman literature of the empire from Horace to Lucian, abounds in proof of the prevalent credulity of this sceptical period. . . . The faith of educated Romans was utterly gone. . . . The imagination of both the popu-

lace and the aristocracy of Rome became fanatically excited, and they greedily welcomed the most absurd and degrading superstitions. Not only was the metropolis of the empire crowded with 'hungry Greeks,' but Syrian fortune tellers flocked into all the haunts of public amusement." (CONYEBEAR AND HOWSON, *St. Paul*, Vol. 1. pp. 145, 146.)

7. Who was with, not occasionally merely, but habitually, residing with him or in his service. **The deputy of the country**—literally, Proconsul—**Sergius Paulus**. There were two classes of provincial governments in the Roman Empire, imperial and senatorial. An imperial province was governed by a *proprator*, or *legate*, appointed by the emperor; a senatorial province by a *proconsul*, appointed by the senate. Cyprus was at first placed in the former class by the Emperor Augustus, who died A. D. 14, but afterward was made by him a senatorial province, in exchange of Dalmatia. Luke shows his accuracy by designating Sergius Paulus by his proper official title. And this accuracy is confirmed by an inscription, discovered by General di Cesnola, at Soli, Cyprus, which reads, "In the proconsulship of Paulus," probably the identical Sergius Paulus of the Acts. **A prudent man**—an *intelligent, thoughtful man*. This very characteristic doubtless led him to seek at first the aid and counsel of Elymas, being dissatisfied with heathenism. He also showed his intelligence and understanding in not accepting all that this magician said, and in sending for Barnabas and Saul. **And desired, sought, to hear the word of God**—the gospel, thus described as a revelation from God. (v. 25.) **Who called for Barnabas and Saul**—to his house, having probably heard of their preaching in the synagogue, and apparently not from a mere curiosity, but from a sincere desire to know what their teaching was.

cerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith. Then

Saul (who also is called Paul),^a filled with the Holy Spirit, set his eyes on him, and 10 said,^o O full of all subtilty and all mis-

^a ch. 4 : 8.

^o Matt. 3 : 7.

8. **Elymas**—generally regarded as an Arabic name, meaning *wise*, which Bar-jesus had adopted for himself, thereby indicating that he was the channel of Arabian wisdom. Dr. Delitzsch, however, derives it from an Aramaic word meaning *powerful*, indicating that this deceiver, like Simon Magus, pretended to be “some great one,” and having “the great power of God.” But whatever its derivation, Luke gives its general popular meaning, as understood at that time, **the sorcerer, or magician**. The name is of Persian or Babylonish origin, and was first applied in a good sense to priests, philosophers, astrologers, and men of science (see on Matt. 2 : 1), but afterward was applied in a lower and bad sense to wizards, false prophets and to the practitioners of the black arts. **Withstood them**. Emphatic. He resisted them, not only by his private and personal influence, but also publicly, by arguments, denunciations, and contradictions. **Seeking, actively, to turn away**, to corrupt and thus turn aside the *proconsul from the faith*, from accepting and believing the new doctrines which Barnabas and Saul preached; for then his influence would be at an end.

9. **Then Saul (who also is called Paul)**—and henceforth throughout this book, and also always thus styled by Paul himself in his Epistles, and by Peter late in life. (2 Peter 3 : 15.) There must be some historical purpose and reason for this change of name at this time. Various explanations have been given. An old hypothesis, suggested by Jerome and held by many moderns, is that the name of this distinguished convert, Sergius Paulus, was adopted by him. But this is inconsistent with Paul’s well-known independence and humility of character, and contrary to the impartiality of the gospel. (James 2 : 1-4.) Besides, as Hackett remarks, “Had the writer connected the name with that event, he would have introduced it

more naturally after ver. 12.” Some have thought that instead of Saul (*the asked for or the longed for*) he adopted the name of Paul (meaning *little*) from a sense of humility, as the least of the apostles (1 Cor. 15 : 9), but this does not explain why the name was changed *at this time* and it savors too much of making a show of his humility. The best explanation is that Saul was his Hebrew name and Paul his Roman name, which, being free-born (23 : 28), he received from infancy; that the former he bore among the Jews, the latter among the Gentiles; that now for the first time is given a miracle or sign of his apostleship among the Gentiles (2 Cor. 12 : 12) and the words of apostolic authority. In spirit, in power, in words, in signally overcoming this “son of the devil,” and in the consequent conversion of this Roman official, we have the first manifestation (at least the first that Luke gives us) of the great apostle to the Gentiles. Hence from this time forth he is presented as the leader in Gentile missionary work and appropriately with his Roman name. Before this it was Barnabas and Saul; henceforth it is Paul and Barnabas. **Filled with the Holy Spirit**—not for the first time (9 : 17), but inspired and specially impelled to utter words of righteous indignation, and declare the judgment of the Lord. **Set his eyes on him**—*firing his gaze upon him*, as one under divine authority, and who through the Spirit could see into the character and motives of his opponent, thus arresting the attention and awe of all present. (See 3 : 4; 14 : 9.) Also compare the words that follow with the address of Peter to Simon Magus. (8 : 20-23.)

10. **Full of all subtilty**—*deceit*, which he was accustomed to practice in his occupation, which manifested itself in every word and act in his present opposition. **All mischief**—*unscrupulousness*, knavery, villiany, in which he was an adept. **Thou child, son, of the devil**—partaker of his

chief, *†* thou child of the devil, *thou* enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? 11 And now, behold, *†* the hand of the Lord is upon thee, *‡* and thou shalt be blind,

not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand. Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, be-

† Matt. 13 : 38; John 8 : 44; 1 John 3 : 8.

‡ Jer. 28 : 15.

† Exod. 9 : 3; 1 Sam. 5 : 6.

* Gen. 19 : 11.

nature and resembling him in his character and disposition. Especially like him in perverting and falsifying the truth; for the devil is a liar and the father of it. (John 8 : 44.) **Devil.** (See on 10 : 38.) Meyer also sees here "an indignant contrast to the name *Bar-jesus*." **Enemy to all righteousness**—hostile to all that is right and good, to purity of life, uprightness of conduct, and to all that is acceptable and pleasing to God. From this description of Elymas it is probable that he showed himself tricky and malignant in disputing with Paul, wresting the Scriptures and giving false meanings to the prophecies concerning the coming and kingdom of the Messiah; denying or perhaps ridiculing the doctrine of the resurrection. **Wilt thou not cease?** The interrogative form gives emphasis and strength to the expression. **To pervert the right or straight ways of the Lord?** To distort and render crooked (Isa. 5 : 20) the methods and conditions of salvation as made known by the Lord, such as repentance toward God, faith in Christ and obedience to him. It was from these that Elymas would turn Sergius Paulus away. He may have gone further and claimed supernatural influence in opposition to the gospel. Hence Abbott's remark deserves notice in passing. "The doctrine that the Holy Spirit holds communion with men, and that angels are ministering spirits of the Most High to man, and that evil spirits are among man's spiritual foes (John 14 : 17; Eph. 6 : 12; Heb. 1 : 14), Elymas in common with all sorcerers of his day and ours, perverted into a doctrine of spiritism, and a practice of pretended communication with spirits."

11. And now—in view of your character and your bitter opposition. **The hand of the Lord**—a phrase often used in the Old Testament ex-

pressing the power of God, manifested in mercy or judgment. (Exod. 9 : 3; 1 Sam. 5 : 11; Neh. 2 : 8.) **Upon thee**—in punishment. For its exercise in mercy see 11 : 21; 4 : 30. **Blind, not seeing the sun**—the positive and the negative side; not being able to see the sun indicated total blindness. Thus oculists test the character and extent of the disease by directing the eyes toward a strong light. **For a season**—the blindness was to be temporary, but how long is unknown. Paul suffered a similar infliction with the happiest results. (9 : 9-12.) Some suppose and tradition relates similar results to Elymas, and that he accompanied Paul to Spain; but such tradition cannot be relied upon. The infliction was immediate. **There fell on him**—language in harmony with the idea that it came from above, from God. (10 : 10, 11.) **A mist and a darkness**—*a dimness and a blindness*, descriptive of the successive stages of the blindness which came quickly upon him. "**Mist**, a poetical Greek word, applied by Homer to the failure of sight at death or in a swoon. . . . As the word *mist* is also used by Galen, the Greek medical writer, some regard it as a trace of Luke's profession." (ALEXANDER.) His miserable condition is vividly brought to view. **He went about**, etc.—rather, *and going about he sought* persons to lead him by the hand. The fitness of the punishment has been noted: That he who deceived and blinded others should himself be made blind and dependent on leaders. Also that Peter and Paul each, at least in one instance, wrought a miracle of righteous wrath, that upon Ananias and this upon Elymas.

12. Then, when this blindness came at once upon Elymas, the *proconsul seeing what was done* believed on Christ, and the doctrines proclaimed by Paul. That he was truly converted to Christ

lieved, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.

13 Now when Paul and his company

loosed from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia. And John departing from them returned to Jerusalem.

¹ ch. 15 : 38.

is the natural inference, and accords with the general use of the word *believe* in the Acts. (See 4 : 4 ; 11 : 21.) The case of Simon Magus (8 : 13) is the only exception, and he professed conversion. That Sergius Paulus was baptized is a natural inference. **Being astonished**—*struck with wonder*. The word is also used of *glad amazement*. (Mark 7 : 37 ; 11 : 18 ; Luke 4 : 32 ; 9 : 43.) It is probably the meaning here ; for the fact that Sergius Paulus believed implies a hearty and glad welcome of the truth. While he was astonished he must have been glad to have been thus extricated from the deceptive devices of Elymas, and to see such clear evidence as to what was the truth. **At the doctrine, the teaching, of the Lord**—not only the new and wonderful teaching concerning Christ, but also the way in which it was taught, so clearly, powerfully, and authoritatively, and confirmed by a miracle. (Mark 1 : 27.) The parallel between this conflict of Paul with Elymas and that of Moses with the magicians of Egypt is worthy of notice. (Exod. ch. 7, 8.) In both the victory is on the side of the Lord.

This completes the brief account of the mission of Paul and Barnabas in Cyprus. No attempt is made to relate what was done ; it is only implied that they preached the gospel in the synagogues from place to place (ver. 5, 6), and it is probable that churches were planted. (See on ver. 6.) How long they continued at Paphos is not told. It is reasonable to suppose a church organized there. In view of all these reasonable inferences from the narrative, it seems that too short a time is generally allowed for the work of these missionaries upon the island ; and that they probably spent there about a year.

13-52. **PAUL AND BARNABAS AT ANTIOCH IN PISIDIA.** (2 Cor. 11 : 26 ; John 1 : 19-27 ; Deut. 1 : 31 ; 7 : 1 ; 1 Sam. 13 : 14 ; Ps. 2 : 7 ; 16 : 10 ; 89 : 20 ; Isa. 49 : 6 ; 55 : 3 ; Hab. 1 : 5.) Before this, under Barnabas as leader, they went to his native Cyprus ; now, with Paul as leader, they go into his

own native Asia Minor. They pursue a kind of half circle through the districts of Pamphylia, Pisidia, and Lycaonia, west and north of Cilicia, Paul's native province. So if Paul had evangelized Cilicia already, he was only extending his labors to the nearest surrounding regions. Probably the spring and early summer, A. D. 46.

13. Paul and his company—Barnabas, Mark, and other attendants. Henceforth Paul is the leader, and the chief speaker. (14 : 12.) In the conversion of Sergius Paulus and the punishment of Elymas, the signs of Paul's apostleship are recognized ; and Barnabas appears at once to concede to him the first place. **Loosed, or set sail from Paphos.** Then going a little west of north, about one hundred and fifty miles, they came to **Perga in Pamphylia**. They do not go through Cilicia, Paul's native province, where he had already labored (9 : 30 ; 11 : 25), but enter Pamphylia, a province just west of Cilicia. Its capital, *Perga*, was a large and flourishing city, celebrated for the temple and worship of the goddess Diana, and situated on the river Cestus, seven miles from its mouth. There are still extensive ruins to be seen. A bar now obstructs the mouth of the river Cestus ; but it was then navigable to Perga. It appears that Paul makes but a brief stop at Perga ; he preaches there on his return. (14 : 25.) Perhaps the approaching summer, when multitudes moved from the plains to the mountains, may have led him to go at once to the regions beyond. That too would be the best season for traveling into the mountainous district. His residence at Tarsus in Cilicia must have made him acquainted with many of the features of these adjoining regions.

An event now occurred, which had a marked effect on the future work of these missionaries : **John departing from them returned to Jerusalem.** Why, we are not told. From 15 : 38, we infer that Paul thought

Paul and Barnabas at Antioch in Pisidia.

14 BUT when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia. And [they] ^awent into the synagogue on the

15 sabbath day, and sat down. And ^aafter the reading of the Law and the Prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, Ye men and brethren, if ye

^a ch. 16 : 13 ; 17 : 2 ; 18 : 4.

^a ver. 27 ; Neh. 8 : 1 ; Luke 4 : 16-19.

Mark worthy of blame, and that he showed weakness, a want of perseverance, or a lack of faith. Various reasons have been suggested: Shrinking from the dangers of a hazardous journey into the interior of Asia Minor; an unwillingness to give himself up fully to the Gentile work; a dissatisfaction with the transfer of leadership from Barnabas to Paul; an anxiety for his mother and home at Jerusalem. A variety of reasons probably actuated him. But years later Paul's feelings changed toward him; for Mark became his fellow worker (Col 4:10), and is commended by him as useful in the ministry. (2 Tim. 4:11.)

14. But they—Paul and Barnabas go on together, John Mark having left them. Passing through the country from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia—a distance of about one hundred and fifteen miles. They may have stopped at different settlements and places on the way. The road from Perga to Antioch passed through a rugged and romantic region of the Taurus Mountains, where water-floods were frequent, and the inhabitants notorious for their lawlessness. Pisidia was the next province north of Pamphylia. Its tribes had rulers of their own, and in their mountain fastnesses, were but partially subdued by the Romans. The passes from the seacoast to the interior are difficult and have always been dangerous. It is a reasonable supposition that on this and other journeys in Pisidia, Paul was exposed to the "perils of rivers" and "the perils of robbers," described in 2 Cor. 11:26. Antioch was a city of considerable importance and a Roman colony, and situated near the borders of Pisidia and Phrygia, on the high centre tablelands of Asia Minor. Like the Syrian city, Antioch, it was founded by Seleucus Nicator, and named after his father, Antiochus. Strabo, the Greek geographer, described it as a Roman colony and situated on an emi-

nence. Its site and vast ruins, consisting of temples, churches, besides a theatre and a magnificent aqueduct, were discovered by Mr. Arundell, of England, in 1833. Also a number of inscriptions were found, one of which included the name of the city. Went into the synagogue—the religious assembly of the Jews. From this we learn the custom of Paul and Barnabas on similar occasions. (Ver. 5) These two strangers had, doubtless, during the week, entered the city quietly and unnoticed; had obtained lodgings, and work at their trade as tent makers, and now with other Jews they enter the synagogue. Sat down—some suppose on the place occupied by the rabbins; but more probably, on a seat near the entrance, as listeners. See next verse. (See note on Luke 4:16.)

15. The law—the first five books of the Old Testament. The prophets—including besides the regular prophets the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings. Some think the lessons of the day were from Dent. 1 and Isa. 1. "The beginning of the discourse (ver. 17, 18, 19) has three Greek verbs, which are rare, and altogether peculiar to the Scriptures, *exalted, suffered their manners, and divided by lot*; of which the first occurs in Isa. 1:2, the second and third in Dent. 1:31, 38. Moreover, these two chapters, Dent. 1 and Isa. 1, are to this day read on one Sabbath; whence it is quite certain that both were read on that very Sabbath, and in Greek, and that Paul referred especially to that reading of Moses and of the prophets mentioned in ver. 15. For even the mention of the Judges (ver. 20) accords with the lesson (Isa. 1:26), and the Jews are wont to take their discourses, or their beginnings, from the Sabbath lesson in the synagogue." (BENGEL.) But if this be so, nothing can be inferred as to the season of the year, because of the changes that have since been made in the synagogue services. Rulers of the synagogue.

have any word of exhortation for the people, say on.

16 Then Paul stood up, and beckoning with his hand, said, Men of Israel, and

17 ye that fear God, give audience. The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of

† Heb. 13 : 22. * ch. 12 : 17. a ver. 26, 42, 43. b Dent. 4 : 37 ; 7 : 6, 7. c ch. 7 : 17 ; Exod. 1 : 1, 7-9 ; Ps. 105 : 23, 24.

Each synagogue had its president, or ruler (18 : 8, 11 ; Luke 8 : 49) and elders (Luke 7 : 3-5), who might chastise (22 : 19 ; 26 : 11 ; 9 : 2), or expel an offender. (John 9 : 34.) In this verse and in Mark 5 : 22, rulers and elders appear to be spoken of indiscriminately as *rulers*. It is not known, however, how perfect was the organization of the synagogue at this time. It was probably changed and developed after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. **Sent unto them**—they were thus sitting in the congregation, perhaps near the entrance, and not among the public speakers. They had probably been in Antioch a day or two and were becoming known as teachers. "Paul had received a regular theological education at Jerusalem from Gamaliel, and thus occupied in Jewish eyes the position of an ordained minister in our own times." (ABBOTT.) **If ye have any word of exhortation**—in application of the law and prophets, and in encouragement of their observance, **say on**. It was customary for the rulers of the synagogue to invite devout strangers and teachers present to expound the Scriptures, read, or exhort. This gave an excellent opportunity for the early preachers to make known the truths of the gospel.

16. Then Paul stood up. Now and onward Paul appears as the chief speaker, Barnabas giving him the precedence. The Jews and Jesus were accustomed to speak sitting ; but Paul and the apostles appear to have spoken standing. (1 : 15 ; 11 : 28 ; 15 : 7.) **Beckoning with his hand**—to secure attention. (See on 12 : 17.)

In this address Paul first reviews the goodness of God to the Jewish people until the days of David (ver. 16-22) ; announces Jesus a descendant of David, who was witnessed by John the Baptist (23-25) ; proved to be the Messiah by prophecy (26-37) ; upon all which he founds an offer of salvation through faith, and a solemn warning against re-

jecting the gospel. This is the first recorded address of Paul, and may serve as a specimen of his addresses at this time. The similarity to portions of Stephen's address has often been noted. The impress of Stephen on Paul's mind must have been deep and lasting. Paul develops more clearly the great doctrine of justification by faith. (Ver. 38, 39.) See note on *Stephen and Paul* at the close of note on 7 : 60. Like Peter, Paul cites Ps. 16 : 10 (2 : 27), and emphasizes the resurrection of Christ, showing that it was the great central doctrine of early Christian preaching. **Men of Israel**—Jews by birth. **Ye that fear God**—devout Gentiles, both those who were proselytes, having embraced Judaism and had been circumcised, and also those who were worshipers of Jehovah through uncircumcised (10 : 2), who had their particular seats in the synagogue. (Ver. 43, 48 ; 16 : 14 ; 17 : 4.)

17. The God of this people of Israel. Paul is addressing all of those whom he calls God-fearing (ver. 16), and here singles out with emphasis and honor, the Israelites who were present. Though now an apostle to the Gentiles, he would not take from the Jews the first and honorable position which they occupied. (Rom. 1 : 16.) **Chose our fathers**—his as well as theirs. The word fathers most naturally refers to the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, etc. (Rom. 9 : 5-13 ; 11 : 1.) **Exalted the people**—to dignity and honor, not merely by increasing their numbers, but by the mighty works wrought by Moses in their behalf. This clause refers to the time previous to their departure from Egypt ; the last clause of this verse describes that departure. **As strangers**—in their sojourn. They were but sojourners. (Gen. 47 : 4, 9. See 1 Peter 1 : 17.) **With a high arm**—an up-lifted arm—with signal power. The arm of God is spoken of in a Hebrew figure as *the might*, the *power* of God

Egypt, ¹ and with an high arm brought he
18 them out of it. And ² about the time of
forty years suffered he their manners in
19 the wilderness. And when ³ he had destroyed seven nations in the land of

Chanaan, ⁴ he divided their land to them by
20 lot. And after that ⁵ he gave unto them
judges about the space of four hundred
and fifty years, ⁶ until Samuel the prophet.
21 ⁷ And afterward they desired a king: and

^d Exod. 6 : 6; 13 : 14, 16; ch. 14. ^e Exod. 16 : 35; Isa. 63 : 9. ^f Deut. 7 : 1; Josh. 24 : 11.
^g Josh. 14 : 1, 2. ^h Judg. 2 : 16. ⁱ 1 Sam. 3 : 20. ^k 1 Sam. 8 : 5-22; 10 : 1.

(Luke 1 : 51), and corresponds here with Exod. 6 : 6, "with a stretched out arm." The figure may have been originally suggested to Moses and the Hebrews, by the familiar hieroglyphic which represents *might* by two outstretched arms.

18. This verse treats of God's goodness and forbearance with Israel in the wilderness. **Suffered he their manners**—their character and conduct. He bore with them, endured them. This reading is supported by the majority of the best manuscripts, and is adopted by Westcott and Hort. By the change of a single letter in the Greek word it would mean, *He bore them as a nursing father*, with probable reference to Deut. 1 : 31; he cherished and nourished them. (1 Thess. 2 : 7.) This is supported by many ancient authorities and some internal evidence, and is preferred by Tischendorf, Haekett, Meyer, and by the American Committee on the Revised New Testament. Haekett says, "The apostle would bring to view here, not so much the forbearance of God toward his people as his interposition, his direct efforts, in their behalf." It is a singular fact that the same textual variation occurs in the Septuagint version of Deut. 1 : 31. Both statements are true, and either fits in with Paul's speech, but the latter reading suits better with his presentation of God's gracious dealings.

19 **Destroyed seven nations**—mentioned in Deut. 7 : 1; Josh. 3 : 10; 24 : 11, namely: The Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. They were descendants of Canaan, taking their names for the most part from his children. (Gen. 10 : 15-19.) Their nationality was destroyed, though the people not utterly, fragments remaining even in the days of Solomon. (1 King. 9 : 20.) Through the Israelites God subdued, 'cast them out.' (Deut. 7 : 1.) So in the

providence of God many nations have been destroyed before other nations—for example, many of the tribes of American Indians. **Divided their land to them by lot**—according to the best manuscripts and highest authorities, *He gave them their land as an inheritance, or possession*. He caused them to inherit and possess the land. The gracious dealings of God in giving the Israelites a home is described.

20. **About the space of four hundred and fifty years**. This is connected with the preceding verse and ends the sentence, according to the best manuscripts. It thus refers to the period between the call of the fathers (ver. 17) and the entrance of the Israelites into their possession. (Ver. 19.) If Paul, like Stephen (7 : 6), starts with the four hundred years of sojourn and oppression, and then adds the forty years wandering in the wilderness, and seven years to the division of the land under Joshua, we have four hundred and forty-seven years. Or starting with the birth of Isaac, who was sixty years old at the birth of Jacob (Gen. 25 : 26), and Jacob a hundred and thirty on going to Egypt (Gen. 47 : 9); and the sojourn there two hundred and fifteen years, and thence forty-seven years to the settlement of the tribes, and we have four hundred and fifty-two years. In either reckoning it is in round numbers, "about four hundred and fifty years." (See 7 : 6.)

The rest of this verse forms another sentence, and should read: *And after these things he gave judges until Samuel the prophet*. Samuel was the next man of great eminence after Moses and Joshua, and was the last of the judges, as well as the first of a long line of prophets, that continued down through the captivity. This shows further God's gracious care over his people.

21. **And afterward they desired**

God gave unto them Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the 22 space of forty years. And¹ when he had removed him,² he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, 'I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine

own heart, which shall fulfill all my will.' 23 ²Of this man's seed hath God according ³to his promise raised unto Israel a 24 Saviour, Jesus: ⁴when John had first preached before his coming the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. 25 And as John fulfilled his course, he said,

¹ 1 Sam. 15 : 23, 26, 28; 16 : 1. ² 1 Sam. 16 : 13; 2 Sam. 2 : 4; 5 : 3. ³ Luke 1 : 32, 69; Rom. 1 : 3. ⁴ ch. 2 : 30-36; 2 Sam. 7 : 12; Ps. 132 : 11. ⁵ Matt. 1 : 21; Rom. 11 : 26. ⁶ Matt. 3 : 1; Luke 3 : 3.

—rather, *they asked for themselves a king*, to gratify their own desires, in order that they might be like the heathen nations about them, being dissatisfied with the theocratic government which God had appointed. (1 Sam. 8 : 5-22.) But though this was of the nature of a rejection and apostasy from Jehovah, as their king, yet God did not reject them, but gave them Saul, the son of Kish for forty years. The Scriptures give no account of the length of his reign; but Josephus (*Antiq.* vi. 14, 9) probably following public records or tradition, states that Saul reigned eighteen years before Samuel's death, and twenty-two years after it.

22. Removed him—*deposed him*, from his kingly office. This is the natural application of the verb. (Luke 16 : 4.) (Compare Septuagint, 2 Kings 17 : 23; Dan. 2 : 21.) Occasionally the expression in Greek is found, "removed from life." God rejected Saul (1 Sam. 15 : 11, 23), and David was anointed soon after. (1 Sam. 16 : 12-14.) But this rejection was not publicly and finally accomplished for twenty-five or more years, till at the end of the forty years (ver. 21), Saul was slain on Mount Gilboa (1 Sam. 30 : 8); and then David was recognized as king. (2 Sam. 2 : 4.) **I have found David**, etc. This is a compound quotation, made up of two passages, given freely, and contains the substance of what God had said on different occasions. "I have found David my servant." (Ps. 89 : 20.) "The Lord has sought him a man after his own heart." (1 Sam. 13 : 14.) He was a man after God's heart, in that, in contrast to Saul, he made God's will his ruling principle, holding the people to the faithful worship of God, and putting down and disallowing idolatry and all the abominations attending idol-worship. This refers specially to the general administration of affairs according

to the divine will, and implies a renewed heart, but does not include all the acts of his private and domestic life. In his personal religious experience he shows longings after a purer life, and bitter repentance over sin. (Ps. 51, etc.) **All my will**—plural, *all my wishes*, regarding Israel and the enemies of God.

23. From David Paul passes at once to the Messiah, who according to the belief of the Jew would be of the seed of David. (Matt. 22 : 42.) **According to his promise.** Many of these, for example: 2 Sam. 7 : 12; Ps. 89 : 33-37; 132 : 11; Isa. 11 : 1-10; Jer. 23 : 5, 6; 33 : 15, 16. **Raised**—rather, according to the best manuscripts, *Brought unto Israel*; as the chosen people, among whom he was to exercise his ministry, and to whom he was first to be preached. **A Saviour**, which is the meaning of the name, **Jesus**. (Matt. 1 : 21.) That Jesus was a descendant of David is witnessed by the genealogical tables in Matthew and Luke. Also by such passages as Luke 1 : 27, 32, 69; Matt. 9 : 27; 15 : 22; 21 : 9; Rom. 1 : 3.

24. Paul adduces the testimony of John the Baptist, whom the people generally regarded as a prophet. **When John**, etc.; John having first preached the baptism of repentance, implying, enjoining, and symbolizing repentance, to all the people of Israel, to the body of the nation as such, who came to hear him. (Matt. 3 : 5; Luke 3 : 3.) **Before his coming**—better, *his entrance*, that is, the entrance of Jesus on his work. Jesus was manifested at his baptism, but did not enter upon his work till after the temptation. (John 1 : 28-34.) His early ministry was in Judea, where John first preached. (John 3 : 1, 22.) After John's imprisonment, Jesus goes northward through Samaria into Galilee, whose inhabitants had probably come into special

*Whom think ye that I am? I am not *he*. But, behold, there cometh one after me, whose shoes of *his* feet I am not worthy to loose.

- 26 Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, ^ato you is the word of this salvation sent. For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, ^bbecause they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the

prophets ^awhich are read every sabbath day, ^athey have fulfilled *them* in condemning *him*. ^aAnd though they found no cause of death *in him*, yet desired ^athey Pilate that he should be slain ^aAnd when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took *him* down from the tree, and laid *him* in a sepulchre. ^aBut ^aGod raised him from the dead: and ^bhe was seen many days of them which came

^a John 1: 20-27. ^a ch. 2: 39; Luke 24: 47. ^a ch. 3: 17; Luke 23: 34; 1 Cor. 2: 8. ^a ch. 15: 21. ^a Luke 24: 20, 26, 27, 44. ^a Mark 15: 13, 14; John 19: 6, 15. ^a John 19: 28, 30, 36, 37. ^a ch. 2: 24; Matt. 28: 6. ^b ch. 1: 3; 1 Cor. 15: 5-7.

contact with John during his closing ministry. (John 3: 23; 4: 1-3; Mark 1: 14, 15.)

25. And as John fulfilled his course, etc. Rather, *And as John was completing his course*, his official life, or public ministry. Compare Paul's expression, "I have finished my course." (2 Tim 4: 7.) **He said**—he habitually said this. See an instance in John 1: 19-23, when a deputation of the Jewish Sanhedrin visits him. **I am not he**—the promised one, the Saviour. (Ver. 23.) **Behold there cometh one after me,** etc. (Mark 1: 7; Luke 3: 16; see on Matt. 3: 11.)

26. Paul makes the first application of his discourse to his hearers, by offering this salvation, which is further enforced in ver. 32. Further applications are made in ver. 38, 40. **Men, also brethren**—addressing them in a most affectionate manner. **Children of the stock of Abraham**, reminding them of their election as the chosen people of God, of their hopes, and the promises to them. (Rom. 9: 3-5.)

Whosoever among you feareth God—among the devout Gentiles present. (See on ver. 16.) **To you**—including both Jews and proselytes. (10: 26.) Or, according to several of the oldest manuscripts, *To us*, who have received him. **Is the word of this salvation**, effected through the Saviour, Jesus. (Ver. 23.) **Sent**—rather, *was sent forth*, from God to be announced to you. Paul shows his familiarity with Scripture in using here part of Ps. 107: 20.

27. For introduces a confirmatory evidence of "His salvation" (ver. 26), and reason why it was sent forth. Prophecy regarding the Messiah was fulfilled in the death and resurrection of Jesus. Not only the mass of the

people at Jerusalem, but also **their rulers**, who were their spiritual guides, fulfilled the Scriptures in **condemning him** (2: 23), because they **knew him not**, as the Messiah of prophecy, **nor yet the voices, the predictions, of the prophets**, though they were **read every Sabbath day**. Peter speaks of this ignorance (3: 17), and Jesus in his first prayer at the crucifixion, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." (Luke 23: 34.) To us who now review Jewish history, how strange appears their ignorance, and how wild their folly!

28. Not only were they totally ignorant of their own Messiah, but they were thoroughly bent on his death. **Though they found**, after all their searchings, **no cause of death** (Luke 23: 22), accusing Jesus of blasphemy and sedition; but, unable to prove either charge, suborned false witnesses (Matt. 26: 60), and **desired**, rather **demanded that he should be slain**. (Luke 23: 20-25.)

29. Fulfilled all that was written of him, in his betrayal, arrest, sufferings, and death. (Ps. 22: 1-5; Zech. 11: 12, 13; 12: 10; 13: 7.) **And laid him in a sepulchre**. It was not necessary for Paul in his rapid summary to distinguish between the various agents in those transactions. The friendly hands of Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea took the body from the cross and buried it: yet both of them were *rulers*; so Paul's statement is true to the letter. (John 19: 38-40.)

30. But in contrast with such extreme and unrighteous rejection of Jesus by the Jews, **God raised him from the dead**, to be a Saviour (ver. 32, 38), his resurrection being the great sign or evidence of his mission

up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem,
 32 ^cwho are his witnesses unto the people.
 And we declare unto you glad tidings, how
 that ^dthe promise which was made unto
 33 the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same

unto us their children, in that he hath
 raised up Jesus again; as it is also writ-
 ten in the second Psalm, ^e"Thou art my
 34 Son, this day have I begotten thee." And
 as concerning that he raised him up from

^c ch. 1: 8; 5: 32.

^d Gen. 3: 15; 12: 3; 22: 18; Rom. 4: 13.

^e Rom. 1: 4; Heb. 1: 5; 5:

5; Rev. 1: 5.

and authority as the Messiah. (See Peter's words 2: 32-36; 3: 14, 15, 26; 1 Cor. 15: 3-28.)

31. And he was seen many days—Forty days. (1: 3.) **Of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem**—specially those disciples that came with him on his last journey to Jerusalem. There were over five hundred eye-witnesses of his resurrection. (1 Cor. 15: 6.) **Who are**, etc., or according to the most approved text, *Who are now his witnesses*. Doubtless the majority of them were still living. **To the people of Israel** (ver. 24) as the chosen people. Thus the resurrection rested on no tradition, but on the testimony of many living men, who had known Jesus well, who saw, touched, and talked with him after he had risen from the dead. (See Rom. 1: 4.)

32. We and you are emphatic. In view of such evidences of salvation and of a risen Saviour, what these companions of Jesus witness elsewhere, *we*, though not among those who saw him during those forty days, now **declare unto you** at Antioch, namely, the **glad tidings that the promise which was made to the fathers** concerning the Messiah.

33. Continuation of the sentence begun in the last verse: **God hath fulfilled the same unto us, their children**, or, according to many manuscripts, *to our children*. The text is uncertain, but the general meaning is plain. This fulfillment had taken place during their day, and was for the benefit of them and their descendants. **In that he hath raised up Jesus again**. Omit *again*. Some take this expression to mean that God raised up, or brought forward Jesus, sending him into the world as the Messiah. Compare this use of the verb in 3: 22; 7: 37. In support of this view is urged the quotation from Ps. 2: 7, **Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee**, which is thought to refer

to Christ's incarnation. (Heb. 5: 5.) It is, however, more in keeping with the context to refer the verb *raised up* to Christ's resurrection, for that is the special topic of this part of the discourse. The verb is frequently used without the addition "from the dead," with reference to the resurrection. (Mark 8: 31; 16: 9; Luke 9: 8, 19; 24: 7.) Christ was the Son of God from all eternity. At his incarnation he was indeed begotten, but by his resurrection he was openly declared to be so. (Rom. 1: 4.) The resurrection might indeed be styled the birthday of his reign. (Rev. 1: 5.) The following from Dr. Hackett is worth pondering over: "The original passage [Ps. 2: 7] refers not to the incarnation of the Messiah, but to his inauguration or public acknowledgment on the part of God as the rightful sovereign of men. To no moment in the history of Christ would such a prediction apply with such significance as to that of his triumphant resurrection from the dead. The progression of the argument in the next verse demands this interpretation. To the assertion here that God had raised Jesus to life again, the apostle adds there that this life is one which death would invade no more." **In the second Psalm**. Some manuscripts read *first Psalm*. It was called first or second according to circumstances. The first and second Psalms were sometimes written together, and are still so found in some manuscripts. Besides, some in ancient times regarded the first Psalm as introductory to the collection, and hence the second as the first. "The second Psalm" is the reading of the majority of manuscripts.

34. And as concerning that, etc. *And that he raised him up from the dead*. Paul proceeds further to prove from prophecy the resurrection of Christ, and everlasting life connected with it. **No more to return to cor-**

the dead, *now* ^fno more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, 'I will give
35 you the *sure mercies* of David.' Wherefore
he saith also in another *Psal*m, ^g'Thou
shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see
36 corruption.' For David, after he had
served his own generation by the will of

God, ^hfell on sleep, and was laid unto
37 his fathers, and saw corruption: ⁱbut
he, whom God raised again, saw no cor-
ruption:
38 Be it known unto you therefore, men
and brethren, that ^kthrough this man is
preached unto you the forgiveness of sins.

^f Rom. 6 : 9 ; Isa. 55 : 3 ; Ps. 89 : 28 ; 2 Sam. 7 : 13. ^g ch. 2 : 31. ^h ch. 7 : 60 ; 1 Kings 2 : 10
ⁱ ver. 30 ; 1 Cor. 15 : 20. ^k ch. 5 : 31 ; Dan. 9 : 24 ; Luke 24 : 47 ; 1 John 2 : 12.

ruption—that destruction which is effected by the decay of the body after death, and hence *no more to die*. Compare Paul's language in Rom. 6 : 9, "Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him." (See also Rom. 5 : 10 ; John 14 : 19 ; Heb. 7 : 25.) To substantiate this he quotes from Isa. 55 : 3, varying somewhat from both the Hebrew and the Septuagint text, but giving the sense substantially. The promise: "I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the *sure mercies* of David," Paul takes and uses that which has special reference to David and to Christ. **I will give you the *sure mercies***, rather, *the holy things* of God, *the sure promises* of David—that is, the Messianic blessings. One of these promises was a successor from his house, the throne of whose kingdom God would establish forever. (2 Sam. 7 : 13, 16 ; 1 Chron. 17 : 11-14 ; Ps. 89 : 3, 4.) This was fulfilled in Christ (Isa. 9 : 6, 7 ; Luke 1 : 32, 33), and includes not only a resurrection, but also an endless immortality.

35. Wherefore, or *because*, he saith also, showing that Christ was to be exempted from the dissolution of the body and hence was to have an endless life, according to a prophetic promise. The quotation is from Ps. 16 : 10, and was presented by Peter in his Pentecostal discourse, which he treats in the same way, showing that they could not apply to David, but that they did apply to Christ. (See on 2 : 27, 30.) The two apostles were in exact agreement in the interpretation of this Messianic prophecy. The independence of the two discourses is seen, in that Paul quotes only a part of a verse from Ps. 16, and links it with a passage from Isaiah, not alluded to by Peter, while the latter quotes four verses from Ps.

16, and joins it with a passage from Ps. 110. For further independence compare the language of the two apostles in their applications as found in the next two verses and 2 : 29-31.

36. David could not have been the subject of that prophecy, for he died and his body went into decay. **After he had served his own generation**, or *after he had, in his own, generation, served the counsel of God*. Either translation is admissible. But the first is preferable as the more natural construction. In serving his own generation, he did it, **by**, or *according to the will, the purpose of God*. Like other men, David was useful to his generation, performing his allotted work according to God's purpose, and then died. **Fell on sleep**, rather, *fell asleep*; quoted from 1 Kings 2 : 10. (See on 7 : 60.) **Was laid unto**, rather, *was added to, his fathers*. This does not refer to his burial, but to his disembodied spirit being added to those of his fathers in the regions of the departed. This is a well-known Hebrew expression, used in distinction from death and burial. (Gen. 35 : 29 ; 2 Kings 22 : 20.) The existence of the soul after death in its separation from the body is recognized. **And saw corruption**—dissolution as to his body. (See on 2 : 29.)

37. The prediction must therefore refer to Jesus who was raised and in his body experienced no decay. (See on 2 : 31.)

38. Paul now comes to the general application of his address, that the Messianic blessings of forgiveness and justification only come from and through Jesus. **Be it known unto you therefore**—in view of the fact, that the prophecies concerning the Messiah are fulfilled in Jesus the Crucified and Risen one. Peter uses this emphatic formula at the beginning of

39 and ¹by him all that believe are justified from all things, ^mfrom which ye could 40 not be justified by the law of Moses. Beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of them in the Prophets;

41 "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you."

¹Isa. 53 : 11; Rom. 3 : 28; Gal. 2 : 16; 3 : 8-11. ^mRom. 3 : 19, 20.

his discourses (2 : 14; 4 : 16); Paul here at the end. **Through this man**, rather *this one*—Jesus. *Is proclaimed unto you the forgiveness, the remission of sins*, the remitting of the penalty of sins. This is announced to you for your acceptance. Peter had proclaimed the same great truth. (2 : 38; 5 : 31; 10 : 43.)

39. Not only will the penalty of sin be remitted, but its guilt will be removed; not only remission, but justification is offered. We have here the first announcement by Paul of the doctrine of justification by faith alone, which is the great central truth of his epistles. **And by him all that believe**, etc. Literally, *And that from all things, from which ye were not able in the law of Moses to be justified, in this one every one believing is justified*. Paul briefly announces a full justification through Christ, and the total inability of the law to justify the sinner. *From all things*—from all sins. *From which ye were not able in, under and through, the law of Moses to be justified*—in other words, the law was not able to justify from any sin. As Paul affirms justification through Christ *from all sins*, so to the same extent he affirms the insufficiency of the law. We cannot suppose, with Meyer and Alford, that Paul makes only a partial statement here, that Christ will do all that the law cannot do, leaving it for inference on further instruction, that the law could absolutely do *nothing* toward justification. Paul's language is brief, but emphatic, both in regard to the law and to Christ. It is unfair both to him and his language to infer that Christ justifies only from some things. The meaning rather is, that he justifies from all sins, and the law from none. Anything less than this would be inconsistent with Paul's teaching elsewhere, and to the New Testament doctrine of salvation through Christ alone. (Rom. 3 : 20-26; 5 : 1; 8 : 1; 10 : 4; Gal. 3 : 11, 22.) Paul spoke from his own experience. (Rom. 7 : 5, 6.)

40. Paul closes with a solemn warning against rejecting the gospel. There is a similarity to the pointed ending of Stephen's speech. (7 : 51.) Paul very probably saw signs of opposition in some and wonder and incredulity in others; arising perhaps from his doctrine of justification through Christ alone, and not by the law, and his free offer of salvation to all that believe. **Therefore**—since you are guilty and exposed, and salvation cannot come by the law, but only through Christ. **Beware**—see to it, take heed. An expression nowhere else employed in this book, but of frequent occurrence in the writings of the apostle who is here speaking. (1 Cor. 3 : 10; 8 : 9; 10 : 12; Gal. 3 : 15; Eph. 5 : 15; Phil. 3 : 2; Col. 2 : 8; 4 : 17.) This coincidence is slight, yet a striking illustration of the strict accuracy of Luke. **In the prophets**—in that part of the Old Testament so named by the Jews. (Ver. 15.)

41. The quotation is from Hab. 1 : 5, and follows the Septuagint, but gives the essential sense of the Hebrew. **Despisers and perish** are not in the Hebrew. The former is regarded as a translation of a similar Hebrew word, (Meyer and others); and the idea of *perish* may be evolved from the Hebrew text. Paul quotes from the version familiar to his hearers, and makes no correction, since the differences in the Septuagint from the original Hebrew, did not affect the application which he was about to make to the Jews of his day. The passage in Habakkuk refers to the judgments to be inflicted on the Jewish nation by the Chaldean armies, and Paul sees in it not a fulfillment, but an illustration and a striking description of the righteous judgments coming upon the rejecters of Christ in his day. Bengel suggests that these words were then used among the pious as a general proverb against all unbelievers. Paul warns the Jews against the deliberate rejection of the long-promised Messiah; and

42. And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them 43 the next sabbath. Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to

them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God.

44 And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word 45 of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which

α ch. 2: 10. ο ch. 11: 23; 14: 22; 2 Cor. 6: 1; Heb. 6: 11, 12; 12: 15. ρ Col. 1: 6, 23; 1 Pet. 5: 12. ς ch. 18: 6; 1 Thess. 2: 14-16; Jude 10.

a few years later his words were verified in the destruction of Jerusalem and the complete breaking up and scattering of the Jewish nation.

42. And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles, etc. The most approved reading is: *And as they*, Paul and Barnabas, *were going out they*, the people, whether Jews or Gentiles, *besought that these words*, etc. It is supposed that an ancient lesson, read in public worship, began with this verse, and that some copyist inserted the words, in order that the verse might be the more clearly understood, and to make it consistent with the hostility of the Jews in ver. 45. It is not probable that all the Jews united in this request. **The next sabbath**—literally, *the sabbath or week between*, which would mean on one of the week-day services, held on Monday and Thursday. But according to the later Greek the phrase means *the Sabbath after*, or next Sabbath, and this is preferred by the best critics, and appears to be the meaning demanded by ver. 44.

43. When the congregation was broken up, or when the synagogue was dismissed. It is not implied that there was any confusion in the assembly. It would seem that Paul and Barnabas were going out before the general dispersion of the people, and were requested by the rulers or others to repeat the discourse the next Sabbath. The assembly then was dismissed, and when most had gone, **many Jews and religious, devout, God-fearing, proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas** to express their assent to what they had heard, and to seek further instruction. **Who** refers to Paul and Barnabas, not to the Jews and proselytes. **Persuaded**—by moving representations induced **them to continue in the grace of God**, in

the favor of God through the gospel. It would seem that some had believed. Compare a similar exhortation by Barnabas to the believers at Antioch in Syria. (11: 23.)

44. The next sabbath. During the intervening week Paul and Barnabas had doubtless been active in private circles, especially among inquirers and those interested in the new doctrine. So deep was the impression made, and so much interest aroused among all classes, especially among the Gentile population, **that almost the whole city**, both Jews and Gentiles, **came together**, doubtless at the synagogue where they were the previous Sabbath. The building must have been crowded, and every avenue filled with people, and many not able to enter. (See Mark 2: 2.)

45. Notice that the Jews only are named here; the proselytes are not mentioned. The latter naturally would not share these feelings. **The multitudes** are those outside of the Jews, including both devout and Pagan Gentiles. **They were—the Jews—filled with envy**—with an indignant and contentious jealousy. (See on 5: 17.) Their Israelitish pride was touched; their angry zeal was stirred; and their jealousy aroused, at such results. "They could not endure the notion of others being freely admitted to the same religious privileges with themselves. This was always the sin of the Jewish people. Instead of realizing their position in the world as the prophetic nation for the good of the whole earth, they indulged the self-exalting opinion, that God's highest blessings were only for themselves." (CONYBEARE AND HOWSON, Vol. I, p. 179.) **Paul** appears as the principal speaker. **Spake against** and **contradicting** are in the original different forms of the same verb, giving emphasis and fullness to the ex-

were spoken by Paul, contradicting and
46 blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas
waxed bold, and said, [†]It was necessary
that the word of God should first have
been spoken to you: but [‡]seeing ye put it
from you, and judge yourselves [‡]un-
worthy of everlasting life, lo, [¶]we turn

47 to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord
commanded us, *saying*, [¶]'I have set thee
to be a light of the Gentiles that thou
shouldest be for salvation unto the ends
of the earth.'

48 And when the Gentiles heard this, they
were glad, and glorified the word of the

[†] Ver. 26; ch. 1: 8; Matt. 10: 6; Rom. 1: 16. [‡] ch. 7: 51; Deut. 32: 21; Matt. 21: 43;
Rom. 10: 19. [¶] Matt. 10: 37, 38; 22: 8. [¶] ch. 18: 6; 28: 28; Rom. 11: 11. [¶] Isa. 42:
1, 6; Luke 2: 32.

pression. The Jews not only opposed
by argument; but denied the applica-
tion of the prophecies which Paul had
made. And at the same time **blas-
pheming**, or *reviling*—heaping abuse
upon Paul and Barnabas as false teach-
ers and heretics, and probably blas-
pheming Jesus, whose death and resur-
rection formed the central point of
gospel preaching. The verb translated
blaspheme means to *revile*, and is
equivalent to our word *blaspheme* when
used of contemptuous speech uttered
against God, or sacred things. (Rom. 2:
24; 3: 8; Mark 15: 29; James 2: 7.)

46. Then Paul and Barnabas,
seeing the bitter opposition, and hearing
the reviling words of the Jews, which
were not shared in by either the devout
or Pagan Gentiles, unite in stemming
the current. **Waxed bold**—*spoke boldly*,
plainly, with assurance. **It was
necessary that the word of God
should first have been spoken
to you**. This was the divine purpose
(Luke 24: 47), and was so commanded
by their risen Lord (1: 8), and had been
prophetically announced to the Mes-
siah. (Ver. 47.) The principle here in-
volved was followed by the apostles
when first announcing the gospel in
every Gentile city. (11: 19; 17: 1, 2; 18:
5, 6.) **Ye put it from you**—scorn-
fully reject it. (See 7: 27, 39.) **And judge
yourselves unworthy of ever-
lasting life**—which they preached
and offered through Jesus Christ. It
was thus these Jews by their con-
duct condemned themselves. They
proved themselves unworthy by re-
jecting their own Messiah. **Lo, we
turn to the Gentiles**—including
the heathen—of that place. Before
this they had been specially addressing
the Jews at Antioch including prose-
lytes and devout Gentiles; from this
time at Antioch they would give their
whole attention to Gentiles. Their

public decision was a representative
one, perhaps the first that they had
been compelled to make in such a pub-
lic manner. It illustrates their custom
elsewhere. How wonderful the grace
of God, that Paul, the once haughty
and fastidious Pharisee, should be im-
bued with this liberal spirit, and recog-
nize that the wall of partition between
Jew and Gentile had been broken down,
and that in Christ all are one. (Eph. 2:
14, 15.)

47. Paul and Barnabas base their
act on the prophetic word of God, and
not upon any momentary impulse. The
Scripture quoted is Isa. 49: 6. The
Messiah is addressed. **For so hath
the Lord commanded**—to preach
the gospel to the Gentiles, as they
had done and proposed to do. **I have
set, or appointed, thee to be a light
of the Gentiles**, revealing the way
of life to them that sit in darkness;
*in order that thou shouldest be
for salvation*, not merely to the
Jews, but to the Gentiles both in the
land of Israel, and to **the ends of
the earth**. This prophecy showed
that the mission of Christ was by no
means to be confined to the Jews, and
that in preaching to the Gentiles, Paul
and Barnabas, as the representatives of
Christ, and the heralds of his gospel,
were acting in obedience to this divine
commission. So the aged Simeon saw
the same truth, quoting Isa. 42: 6. (See
Luke 2: 32. Compare Rom. 9: 25; Isa. 11: 1, 10.)

48. The effect on the Gentiles.
They *rejoiced* that the same privileges
and blessings were offered them as
to the Jews, and they *praise* and
honor the word of the Lord, the
gospel of Christ, as it had been preached
to them. While the Gentiles generally
were ready to applaud the step that
Paul and Barnabas had taken, and to
honor the truth, yet all did not savingly
believe. **As many as were or-**

Lord: *and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.

49 And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region. But

† ch. 2 : 47 ; John 10 : 16, 26, 27 ; Rom. 8 : 30 ; 11 : 2 ; 2 Thess. 2 : 13, 14.* 2 Tim. 3 : 11.
* comp. Am. 7 : 12.

ordained, or appointed unto eternal life—an endless blessed existence—**believed**. Thus accepted the truth and the Lord Jesus Christ as their only Saviour. Many attempts have been made to soften the teachings of this clause by unnatural constructions, or by giving the verb **ordained** some other rendering, such as, *disposed* in their minds. But this verb is not used to denote a mere disposition of the mind, but always the exercise of power and authority, either human or divine. (17 : 26 ; 22 : 10 ; 15 : 2 : 28 23, etc.) In the passive form as here, it cannot denote a self-determination, but a previous divine determination respecting those who believed. They were *ordained* or *appointed* unto eternal life, according to some plan or arrangement of God. Compare Rom. 13 : 1, "The powers that be are ordained of God." Luke's object was not to state a doctrine, but a historical fact. Yet a great principle or truth in the divine plan of salvation is implied. Hence this doctrine must be learned more fully from other passages. (Rom. 8 : 28-30 ; E ph. 1 : 4-11 ; 2 Thess. 2 : 13 ; 2 Tim. 1 : 9 ; 1 Peter 1 : 2.) While on the one hand these believing Gentiles were the subjects of a divine choice, on the other hand it is implied in the word **believed** that they exercised not a mere mechanical, but a free act. Both God's sovereignty and man's freedom are clearly taught in the Scriptures, and neither one excludes the other. With our limited knowledge of the divine modes of working, and our finite conceptions of the relations of the Infinite to the finite, we may not be able to fully explain or harmonize these doctrines ; but it becomes us to bow before infinite wisdom, and accept both as true, and act accordingly. (Phil. 2 : 22, 13.)

49. Antioch in Pisidia becomes the centre of missionary work in that region. **And**, in continuation and as a result of this work among Gentiles, **the word of the Lord was published, was spread abroad, through-**

the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and *raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and *expelled them out of

out all the region, the vicinity of Antioch. It is probable that this was done principally by the new converts ; yet Paul and Barnabas may have visited some of the nearer villages. This would seem to indicate that they were several weeks in Antioch and its vicinity.

50. But while this work was going on the opposing Jews adroitly contrived to drive Paul and Barnabas from the city. **Devout women**—Gentile women, who were worshipers of Jehovah, and had probably embraced Judaism. Their hostility could easily be excited against doctrines represented as opposed to their new faith. Josephus says (*War*. ii. 20, 2), that at Damascus almost all of the married women were "addicted to the Jewish religion." Doubtless many of the Gentile women at Antioch were either proselytes or favorable to the Jewish faith. These women were also **honorable** in their social position (17 : 12), being married to men of rank and high standing, very probably to these **chief men of the city**. It was through these women that the crafty Jews reached their Gentile husbands. "Strabo, who was intimately acquainted with the social position of the female sex in the towns of Western Asia, speaks in strong terms of the power which they possessed and exercised in controlling and modifying the religious opinions of the men." (CONEYBEARE and HOWSON, Vol. I. p. 180.) This is the first instance of their influence recorded in the narrative of Paul. They will appear in connection with Paul's life frequently hereafter. (16 : 14 ; 17 : 4, 12, 34 ; 18 : 2 ; Phil. 4 : 3 ; 1 Cor. 7 : 16.) **Raised persecution**—stirred up strong opposition to Paul and Barnabas, who were **expelled** not only from the city, but **out of their coasts, their borders**. They could hardly have been legally and formally expelled, for they return to Antioch a year—more or less—after. It was rather a popular out-

51 their coasts. ^b But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto

52 ^c Iconium. And the disciples ^d were filled with joy, and with the Holy Spirit.

^b ch. 18 : 6; Matt. 10 : 14; Mark 6 : 11; Luke 9 : 5. ^c ch. 11 : 1. ^d ch. 2 : 46; Matt. 5 : 12; John 16 : 22; Gal. 5 : 22.

break, led by the first men of the city, before which these missionaries were driven out. What violence they may have suffered we are not told. Paul refers to this persecution near the close of his life. (2 Tim. 3 : 11.)

51. Having been rejected by the Jews and the leading men of Antioch, Paul and Barnabas shook off the dust of their feet against them, according to the Lord's command. (Luke 9 : 5.) The Jews were accustomed to shake off the dust when they returned to their own land from a heathen country as polluted. So by this act these missionaries signified that their persecutors were devoted to destruction, and that the very dust of their city was polluted. (See 18 : 6; Neh. 5 : 13.) They also signified that they had done their duty, and that the blood of their persecutors would be upon their own heads. **Iconium** was a populous city, about ninety miles southeast of the Pisidian Antioch, near the foot of Mount Taurus, situated on one of the largest plains of Asia Minor. It is generally regarded as belonging to Lycaonia, and practically its capital; and was upon the great line of communication between Ephesus and Antioch, of Syria and the Euphrates. It is now called *Koniye*, and has a population of twenty or thirty thousand. Paul and Barnabas approached it from the west by the military road that crosses the mountain chain. For hours the city was in sight before reaching it. From it the lofty summit of mountains were seen on every side, except toward the east, where a plain stretches beyond the sight. At this time it was under a local tetrarch. The diversity of governments at that time in Asia Minor, was an advantage to Paul and Barnabas, affording them opportunity to escape from one jurisdiction to another. They obeyed the command of the Lord, "When they persecute you in this city, flee into another." (Matt. 10 : 23.)

52. The disciples—at Antioch who continued there amid much opposition and persecution. (14 : 22.) A church

had been gathered, whose members, notwithstanding the disheartening surroundings and the expulsion of their beloved teachers, were filled with joy, the comforts, hopes, and blessed assurances of their new faith. And this state of mind was connected with and arose from being filled with the Holy Spirit. (Gal. 5 : 22.) Thus they had "all joy and peace in believing and all joy in the Holy Spirit." (Rom. 14 : 17; 15 : 13.) In them was verified the assurance of the Lord. (Matt. 5 : 11, 12. See Acts 5 : 41.)

PRACTICAL REMARKS.

1. Antioch is the mother of foreign missions. Every church should be the center of missionary activity. (Ver. 1-3; Matt. 28 : 19, 20.)

2. Those who perform present duty are most likely to be called to enlarged spheres of service. (Ver. 2; Mark 4 : 25.)

3. In entering on ministerial and missionary service there should be: 1. Conversion; suitable mental talents; an earnest desire to glorify God and save souls, and a call by the Holy Spirit to the work. 2. The approval and recognition of the call by the church. In what is styled ordination this call is recognized by prayer and the laying on of hands. (Ver. 2, 3; 26 : 16; 1 Tim. 1 : 12.)

4. The cause of missions is of God. The Holy Spirit chooses fit agents for the work, and blesses those sent forth. (Ver. 4; Rom. 15 : 18, 19.)

5. We should strive to enter every door opened before us for doing good. Paul and Barnabas at once entered Cyprus, and wherever they found a synagogue they used it for announcing the glad tidings. (Ver. 5; 14 : 27; 1 Cor. 16 : 8, 9.)

6. Men long for a knowledge of God. If they do not accept the true religion they will adopt a false one. (Ver. 6; Rev. 2 : 20.)

7. Sergius Paulus is a type of many in the heathen world, who are ready to hear the word of God. (Ver. 7; 17 : 19, 34; 19 : 9, 20.)

8. Elymas is a type of the worldly-wise, leading away from God and opposing the truth. (Ver. 8; 1 Cor. 1 : 21; Rev. 2 : 14.)

9. We can safely rebuke sin and sinners, if filled with the Spirit. (Ver. 9; 2 Tim. 4:2.)

10. We must sometimes speak with great plainness of speech to the perverters of truth, but it must be done discreetly and with a sanctified judgment. (Ver. 10; Titus 1:13.)

11. "How soon God can bring down the pride of man and make him helpless as an infant." (BARNES.) (See ver. 11; Ps. 18:27.)

12. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to them that believe. (Ver. 12; Rom. 1:16; 2 Cor. 2:16.)

13. The servant of the Lord should not leave or turn aside from his work without great thoughtfulness and much prayer. (Ver. 13; 21:12-14.)

14. We should seek places and opportunities of doing good. (Ver. 14; Gal. 6:10.)

15. While we should not intrude ourselves upon strange congregations, we should ever be ready to give a reason of the hope that is within us. (Ver. 15; 1 Peter 3:15.)

16. A knowledge of the history of God's people is of great advantage to the preacher of the gospel. (Ver. 16-22; 18:24; Matt. 24:15, 25.)

17. The history of the Jews is among the strongest arguments for Christianity. (Ver. 17-22; Luke 24:44; Matt. 24:15, 25.)

18. How marvellous the patience of God toward his erring people, and his long sufferings toward sinners! (Ver. 18; 1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 3:9.)

19. Nations are judged in this world. (Ver. 19; Jer. 12:17; Gen. 15:14.)

20. God's gifts are often mingled with chastisements, and the latter are often increased by the determination of his people to have their own way. (Ver. 20; Deut. 8:5; Heb. 12:5, 6.)

21. Obedience to God's word, the prompt doing of his will is especially pleasing to him. (Ver. 22; 1 Sam. 15:22.)

22. The New Testament is hidden in the Old. Jesus, the Saviour, is the Fulfiller of the types, shadows, and promises of the Old Dispensation. (Ver. 23; Heb. 10:1-7, etc.)

23. Jesus was John's Master and David's Lord. All prophets and teachers pointed to Christ. (Ver. 24, 25; 10:36.)

24. Salvation was first sent to the Jews, God's chosen people and Christ's nation after the flesh, and through them to the world. (Ver. 26; John 4:23.)

25. We need the guidance of Christ and his Spirit, lest the Bible be a sealed book to us as it was to the Jews. (Ver. 27; 2 Peter 3:16; Luke 24:45.)

26. Paul was a model in presenting the truth in such a manner as to give no unnecessary offence. (Ver. 27-29; 17:22, 23.)

27. We should preach both the cross and the resurrection, a dying and a living Saviour. (Ver. 29-31; Rom. 4:25.)

28. Preachers of the gospel are messengers of glad tidings, announcing a risen Saviour and the remission of sins. (Ver. 32-34; Luke 24:46, 47.)

29. The "sure mercies of David" belong to every believer, secured by an immutable promise and a covenant ordered and sure. (Ver. 34; 1 Cor. 3:21, 22.)

30. He who serves God the best will best serve his generation. (Ver. 36; James 5:10.)

31. The triumph of Christ over death and the grave is a pledge of a like triumph of his people. (Ver. 35; John 14:19.)

32. The law was weak in that it fixed a penalty, but could not forgive; it condemned, but could not justify, cleanse the soul and make righteous. (Ver. 38, 39; Rom. 3:20; 8:3; Gal. 3:19.)

33. Christ has made a full atonement for sin and wrought out a perfect righteousness, and he is thus the end of the law for righteousness, and delivers us from its curse. (Ver. 38, 39; Rom. 10:4; Gal. 3:13.)

34. Justification by faith in Christ and the forgiveness of sins through faith in him are grand peculiarities of the gospel. (Ver. 39; Rom. 8:1; Eph. 1:7.)

35. Sinners may be amazed at the works of God and yet perish. (Ver. 41; 8:13, 21.)

36. The greatness of the gospel offer enhances the guilt of those who reject it. (Ver. 41; Heb. 2:3.)

37. Men may be anxious to hear the truth and not be savingly benefited by it. (Ver. 42; James 1:22.)

38. Though the blessings of the gospel are all of grace they are not to be attained or enjoyed without efforts of our own. (Ver. 43; Luke 13:24.)

39. Proud and self-righteous professors are sometimes annoyed in seeing all classes pressing into the kingdom. (Ver. 44, 45; Luke 15:28-30.)

40. Prejudices against the truth may be so

Paul and Barnabas at Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe; their return to Antioch.

14 AND it came to pass in Iconium, that they went both together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake, that a

great multitude both of the Jews and also
2 of the Greeks believed. But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil affected against the
3 brethren. Long time therefore abode

obstinate that even a revelation will not remove them. (Ver. 44, 45; Luke 16:31.)

41. Sinners, by their conduct, not only condemn themselves, but may also show thereby that there is no propriety in further offers of eternal life to them. (Ver. 46; Luke 13:34, 35.)

42. It is the purpose of God that the gospel should be carried to the ends of the earth, since its offers are designed for all of the human race. (Ver. 47; Luke 24:47.)

43. "The conversion of men is not an accident, or an uncertainty. It is in pursuance of God's eternal purpose which embraced it and all the events leading to it. To us it is disclosed only by their own act of coming to Christ." (I. P. WARREN.) (Ver. 48.)

44. "By women God's kingdom is often greatly advanced or retarded." (BENGEL.) (Ver. 50.)

45. Ministers should so preach the gospel as to be able to testify that they are free from the blood of all men. (Ver. 51; 20:26, 27.)

46. The Christian religion is a joyful religion, notwithstanding all of the trials and persecutions that may attend it. (Ver. 52; Phil. 3:1; 4:4.)

Ch. 14: This chapter completes the account of Paul's first missionary tour. After completing their work at Iconium they visit Lystra and Derbe; and from thence return by the way they came, and reaching Attalia, a seaport of Pamphylia, they sail to Antioch of Syria, where they report their successes to the church.

1-7. EXPERIENCES OF PAUL AND BARNABAS AT ICONIUM. (2 Tim. 3:10.) It was probably in the summer of A. D. 46. They continued here "a long time," probably several months. (Ver. 3.)

1. It came to pass. This doubtless occurred soon after their coming to **Iconium**. (See on 13:51.) **They went, or entered, both together into the synagogues,** which seems to have been not according to their usual custom. Both were led by the Spirit. **So spake**—with such clearness, force, and

nunction. **A great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed.** The synagogue still continued the place for reaching both Jews and Gentiles. (13:14.) There appears no sufficient reason for restricting *the Greeks* to proselytes. Paul's reputation would naturally attract Gentiles of various classes. "Some deny that heathen Greeks would frequent the synagogues, but such a practice is not only natural and probable, but actually mentioned in the classics, which bear witness to the interest felt in Judaism and the practice of attending its worship, even in Rome." (J. A. ALEXANDER.) The great success of the gospel here doubtless aroused the jealousy of the Jews and thus led to the banishment of Paul and Barnabas.

2. But the unbelieving Jews—those who disbelieved, or disobeyed, for the original suggests both ideas—that is, those who *rejected* the gospel. To disbelieve was to disobey, and to reject included both. **Stirred up the Gentiles and made their minds evil affected**—made them hostile and malignant **against the brethren**, the new converts, both Jews and Gentiles. *Brethren* was a favorite term by which the disciples designated themselves. (9:30.) It has been noted that all but two (16:19; 19:23) of the many persecutions recorded in the Acts were occasioned by the Jews. How they could have thus influenced the Gentiles is not told. Very likely by arousing their political prejudices against Paul and Barnabas as preachers of another kingdom than that of Cæsar. (16:20, 21.) And their ministry against idolatry (19:26) may have made the heathen Gentiles more ready to be influenced.

3. Therefore—an inference, not only of ver. 1, but also of ver. 2. Not the great success of the gospel alone, but also the obstacles produced by the Jews among the Gentiles, prolonged their stay. The first rendered continued efforts desirable, the second made it necessary, so as to counteract

they speaking boldly in the Lord,* which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands.

4 But the multitude of the city was divided: and part held with the Jews, and

5 part with the † apostles. And when there was an assault ‡ made both of the Gentiles, and also of the Jews, with their rulers, § to use them despitefully, and to stone 6 them, they were aware of it, and † fled unto Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia,

* Mark 16 : 20 ; Heb. 2 : 4.

† ch. 13 : 2, 3.

‡ 2 Tim. 3 : 11.

§ Matt. 10 : 23.

and overcome, if possible, the disaffection. **Long time therefore**—literally, *sufficient time* to accomplish their work under such difficulties. The Greek word when used of time is indefinite, the length of time being inferred from the context and the circumstances. It may be used of a few hours or of many months. (See 8 : 11 ; 20 : 11 ; 27 : 9 ; Luke 20 : 9 ; 8 : 27 ; 23 : 8.) A few months answers well the description here. **Speaking boldly in the Lord**—literally, *upon*, in reliance upon the Lord. Their dependence upon the Lord Jesus gave them boldness. **Who gave testimony**, or *bare witness* to the word of his grace, the gracious proclamation of the gospel. "A noble definition of the gospel." (BENGEL.) **And granted.** *And* should be omitted according to the best critical authorities. The Lord attested their preaching by *granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands*. These signs were Christ's approval of their work, not the means of conversion. A great multitude was converted before; how great the fruit of their preaching after we are not told.

4. The embittered feelings take tangible shape and organized form. **The multitude of the city**—the Gentiles. The interest and consequent excitement became so great that the populace take sides throughout the city. **Apostles.** Here and in ver. 14 this term is applied to both Paul and Barnabas. So also perhaps to Timothy and Silvanus in connection with Paul in 1 Thess. 2 : 7. Some have regarded Rom. 16 : 7 as a similar application, but there Andronicus and Junias, or Junia, are spoken of as persons "of note among the apostles," that is, highly regarded by them. It should be noted that in no instance are these companions of Paul called apostles when spoken of alone, but only as associated with him, in the above examples. They cannot, therefore, be re-

garded as apostles in the highest official sense. In a general sense of the word they were *missionaries*, or messengers, and as eminent teachers and as *associated with Paul in apostolic work* they could be briefly and in a general way styled apostles.

5. **And when**, or *as*, indicating the time and the cause of the flight mentioned in ver. 6. **An assault.** The word thus translated means any *violent movement onward* and is especially applied to the beginning or *first stir toward* a thing. It is found elsewhere in the New Testament only in James 3 : 4, where the Revised Version properly translates it *impulse*. But *impulse* seems hardly strong enough here, while *assault* or *onset* seems too strong, "because," as Dr. Hackett remarks, "**having become aware** (ver. 6) would then be superfluous, and because the object of the flight was to escape an attack." It is better to regard it as descriptive of the beginning of an assault,—*a start, or a movement, was made . . . to abuse and stone them*. Notice the exact agreement between Luke's account of an attempt to stone them which was not carried out and Paul's record in 2 Cor. 11 : 25, "Once was I stoned," which occurred at Lystra. (ver. 19.) "Truth is necessarily consistent, but it is scarcely possible that independent accounts, not having truth to guide them, should thus advance to the very brink of contradiction without falling into it." (PALEY.) **Their rulers**—Gentile magistrates and officers of the synagogue.

6. Continuation of the sentence begun in the preceding verse. **They were aware**, or *became aware of it*, probably by report or information; as of the hostile designs of the Jews at Damascus, when Paul fled. (9 : 24.) Their flight showed, not cowardice, but prudence, and was in obedience to our Lord's command, "When they perse-

and unto the region that lieth round
7 about: and there they preached the
gospel.

8 ⁱ And there sat a certain man at Lystra,

impotent in his feet, being a cripple,
from his mother's womb, who never had
9 walked: the same heard Paul speak: who
^k steadfastly beholding him, and ^l perceiv-

ⁱ ch. 3: 2.

^k see ch. 3: 4.

^l Matt. 8: 10; 9: 21, 22, 28, 29; 21: 22.

cute you in one city, flee into another." (Matt. 10: 23.)

Lystra and Derbe. Their site is unknown. Lystra was

between Iconium and Derbe, and Derbe between Lystra and Cilicia; for when Paul was on his way from Cilicia he reached Derbe first (16: 1), and in going from Derbe to Iconium he passed through Lystra. Both towns were inhabited by a rough hardy people, who had been but little affected by Greek, Roman, or Jewish influence. The most probable site of Lystra was the eastern part of the great plain of Lycaonia, about forty miles southeast of Iconium, and at the ruins now called Bin-bir-killessch, a Turkish town, where are the remains of numerous churches. And this accords with the early Christian history of this city, the names of its pastors appearing in the records of early councils. Derbe was probably about twenty miles southeast of Lystra, on or near the great road from Tarsus which passes through the Taurus range by a difficult pass, called the Cilician Gates, thence entering upon the great upland plain of Lycaonia, northwest to Iconium. Different sites in this region have been assigned to Derbe. A small village in a wild valley among the mountains, called Divle, is one of these sites. A church was planted at Derbe (ver 21.) and Gains was also a native here, who became a friend and companion of Paul. (20: 4.) We may note the accuracy of Luke, that no persecution in Derbe is recorded in this chapter and none in 2 Tim. 3: 10, 11, where Paul refers to persecutions suffered in this journey. Timothy probably lived at Lystra, as he knew of Paul's persecutions, and was probably converted under Paul's ministry at this time. (16: 1; 1 Cor. 4: 15, 17.) **Lycaonia** was a district, not very carefully defined, extending from the Taurus mountains and Cilicia on the south to Cappadocia on the north. It is a desolate region, unwatered by streams, but said to be favorable to sheep raising. It was inhabited by a

fierce and warlike people, who had a language of their own. (Ver. 11.) **The region that lieth round about.** Paul and Barnabas did not confine their ministry to these two cities, but extended it into the country and villages between them, and in their vicinity.

7. Continuation from the preceding verse. **There they preached**—rather, *were preaching*, implying that for some time they were there publishing the glad tidings of salvation.

8-18. **PAUL'S MIRACLE AT LYSTRA, AND ITS EFFECT UPON THE PEOPLE.** (Exod. 20: 11; Ps. 146: 6.) It was probably in the autumn of A. D. 46 that Paul and Barnabas came to Lystra, and some months must have been occupied here and in the surrounding country. (See on ver. 7.) Compare the miracle wrought by Peter, which this resembles. (3: 2 f.)

8. **There sat a certain man**—probably in the market place, or in some thoroughfare of the city, where Paul was preaching, since there is no mention of any synagogue in Lystra. His friends may have brought him hither to beg alms, like the one mentioned in 3: 2. He was **impotent in his feet**, *unable* to use them, a **cripple**, who perhaps could creep about upon his hands and knees, but **who never had walked**. As this had been his condition from his birth, his case would be regarded as incurable and hopeless. Notice how minutely Luke, the physician, describes the malady.

9. **The same heard Paul speaking**, teaching and preaching concerning Jesus. Paul's interest in the cripple is aroused, and **steadfastly beholding him**, probably to ascertain through the Spirit's aid his actual condition, both physical and spiritual. **And perceiving**, from the expression of his countenance, which Paul knew to be a true index to his soul, that the man had faith to be healed—literally, *to be saved*. It would seem that the

10 ing that he had faith to be healed, said with a loud voice, ^mStand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked.

11 And when the people saw what Paul had

done, they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, ⁿThe gods are come down to us in the likeness of men.

12 And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and

^m ch. 3 : 6-8; Isa. 35 : 6.

ⁿ ch. 8 : 10; 28 : 6.

cripple exercised, not only what had been styled a faith of miracles, an assurance that he could and would be healed, but also a saving faith of salvation through Jesus Christ. He had listened to Paul's preaching on the death and resurrection, the power and works, of Christ, and he showed by his appearance that he accepted these great truths and facts as suited and applicable to himself. "While the cripple hears the word, he feels its power in his soul." (BENGEL.)

10. Said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. He never had walked before. A few manuscripts add, *I say to you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ*, but most of the old manuscripts omit the words, as an interpolation in part from 3 : 6. Paul doubtless uttered or implied similar words. He was at the time speaking of Jesus, and if the cripple had been taught and had just accepted the Saviour, Paul needed not so much to mention that name which they both understood to be the source of salvation. Indicative of a soul full of faith, **he leaped, sprang up and walked about.** His cure was instantaneous and complete. The principal differences between this miracle and that in chapter 3 are : 1. The lame man in Jerusalem desired and hoped to receive alms even after Peter bade him look on him. But the cripple at Lystra had already been an attentive listener to Paul. 2. Peter took the lame man by the hand and lifted him up; but the cripple sprang up without Paul's assistance. He was in the audience which Paul was addressing, perhaps in the outskirts, some little distance from the apostle.

11. The rude Lycaonians at once perceived in the miracle of Paul the manifestation of supernatural power. (See Mark 2 : 12.) But their exclamations and conduct showed that they very imperfectly understood his preaching. They impulsively lift up their voices,

and very naturally in their excited condition use their native dialect, **the speech of Lycaonia**, instead of the Greek which the missionaries had spoken, and which was the ordinary language of commerce in the cities of Asia Minor. This appears to have been a peculiar and strange tongue, the character of which cannot be determined. Some have regarded it as a corrupt dialect of the Greek; others, that it was allied to the Assyrian. This affords the reason, at least in part, for the delay of the apostles in refusing divine honor until they heard the priest approaching with the victims and the garlands. (Ver. 13.) But much of this was said and done away from the apostles, who "rush forth" when they heard of it. (Ver. 14.) Neither their inspiration nor their gift of tongues appear to have been called into use at this time. (1 Cor. 14 : 18.) **The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men**—this language agrees with the general belief of the heathen, and with the local superstitions and traditions of this very country, related in one of the fables of Ovid, who also relates the visit of Jupiter and Mercury in the form of men to Philemon and Baucis in the adjacent province of Phrygia. Very likely this idea was at first suggested by some one, and at once accepted as a fact, and taken up by the multitude.

12. They called Barnabas, Jupiter, or Zeus, the Greek name answering to Jupiter, who was regarded as the highest and most powerful among the heathen gods. And they called **Paul Hermes**, the name in Greek answering to Mercury, the messenger of the gods, the god of eloquence and prudence, and an attendant of Jupiter in his expeditions. In ancient art Jupiter is represented as large; Mercury as small. Besides, Jupiter had a temple in front of the city gates. As Paul was the **chief** or **leading speaker**, they conclude that he is

Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief
13 speaker. Then the priests of Jupiter,
which was before their city, brought
oxen and garlands unto the gates, and
would have done sacrifice with the people.

14 Which when the apostles, Barnabas and
Paul, heard of, they rent their clothes,
and ran in among the people, crying out,
and saying, Sirs, why do ye these things?
We also are men of like passions with

* Dan. 2 : 46.

P Num. 14 : 6.

q ch. 3 : 12; 10 : 26; James 5 : 17; Rev. 19 : 10.

Mercury, the attendant of Jupiter, whom they conclude Barnabas to be. The silent, larger, and older appearance of Barnabas may also have confirmed them in this impression. Perhaps also we may infer that Paul was small of stature from the statement of his enemies that his bodily presence was weak (2 Cor. 10 : 1, 10), which must be taken with some allowance, as the estimate of dislike and prejudice. The book of the Acts gives many illustrations of his power as a speaker.

13. The excited multitude at once proceed to act on their conclusion and to offer sacrifice. **The priest**—who may have been present, or the principal one, or the most active one, for there must have been a number of them at Lystra. **Of Jupiter which**—*who was before the city*, whose statue and whose temple was there. Hence the Revised Version renders *whose temple was before the city*, near its chief entrance. **Brought oxen, or bulls** (Heb. 9 : 13; 10 : 4), the most costly victims, which the heathen were accustomed to offer to Jupiter, and sometimes to Mercury. Here the sacrifice was intended for both. **Garlands, or crowns**, especially for the victims. The priests and the altar were also often thus adorned. **Unto the gates** of the city just spoken of. The word translated *gates* is used by Luke elsewhere, in the singular number, with reference to the door of a house. (10 : 17; 12 : 13, 14; Luke 16 : 20.) Hence some understand *the door* of the house, where Paul and Barnabas were lodging; but this requires the supposition that they returned to the house in the meantime. Besides, the *plural* is used, expressive of the parts, as being double, of city gates. So the plural is used elsewhere in the New Testament. (Rev. 21 : 12, 13, 15, 21, 25; 22 : 14.) **Would have done sacrifice**—was just about to offer sacrifice when Paul and Barnabas sprang in upon the scene and pre-

vented. **With the people**—with the crowd who attended to witness and approve.

14. **Which when**—rather, *But the apostles*, as in ver. 4. Notice that **Barnabas** is very naturally named first, as in the scene described, regarded as Jupiter, for whom principally the sacrifice was intended. **Heard**—not the tumult, but what the multitude was proposing to do. How they heard is not told; perhaps one of the converts, or one of the few Jews residing there reported it to them. Preparations for this act of worship must have been going on for perhaps an hour or more; for they seemed to be all complete before the missionaries were aware of them. **They rent their clothes**—from the neck in front downward toward the girdle, either their outer garments, or perhaps both the inner and outer garments. This was a common Oriental method of expressing grief and horror, or indignation and abhorrence of impiety or blasphemy. (2 Sam. 1 : 2; Matt. 26 : 65.) **And ran in**, etc. Rather, according to the most approved Greek text, *And rushed forth among the multitude*—from the place where they were teaching or resting, probably through the city gates into the midst of the multitude who were gathered for sacrifice before the temple of Jupiter. **Crying out**, with a loud voice, shouting. The narrative is very vivid. They plunge into the excited crowd vociferating, interrupting, and putting a stop to the impious service. Compare Peter's refusal to receive homage of Cornelius (10 : 25), and contrast Herod Agrippa's readiness to accept divine honors. (12 : 22.)

15. Getting the attention of the people, they utter their solemn protests. This is generally regarded as Paul's address, as he was the chief speaker (ver. 12), and from the similarity in thought with his address at Athens (17 : 24-28) and with Rom. 1 : 19, 20. But

you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from ^rthese vanities ^sunto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein. ^tWho in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. ^uNevertheless he left not himself without

witness, in that he did good, and ^vgave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness. ^wAnd with these sayings scarce restrained they the people, that they had not done sacrifice unto them.

^r Deut. 32 : 21; 1 Cor. 8 : 4. ^s Deut. 5 : 26; Jer. 10 : 11-15; 1 Thess. 1 : 9. ^t ch. 17 : 30. ^u ch. 17 : 27; Ps. 19 : 1-4; Rom. 1 : 19, 20. ^v Lev. 26 : 4; Deut. 11 : 14; Ps. 147 : 8; Matt. 5 : 45.

Barnabas must have earnestly joined in the protest. We have the substance of what they said. Compare 13 : 16-46, and notice how different Paul's method in reaching Jews and devout Gentiles. **Sirs**—literally, *Ye men*. **Why do ye these things?** A question implying strong disapproval and expostulation, the reason for which immediately follows. Ye are men, and so we also are men—and that too of like passions with you, of like feelings, affections, and sufferings, similarly constituted and partakers of like infirmities, and consequently not divine. The word of *like passions* is emphatic here. It is only found elsewhere in the New Testament in James 5 : 17, which compare. So far from being objects of divine honors, we are missionaries, *announcing to you that ye should turn from these vanities*, such as your idols and your idol-worship (probably pointing to the temple of Jupiter and to their sacrifices) *to the living God*, in contrast to their lifeless images and imaginary gods. (1-a. 40 : 18-26.) Thus Jehovah is designated in the Old Testament. (Deut. 5 : 26; Jo-h. 3 : 10; 1 Sam. 17 : 26. Compare 1 Cor. 8 : 4.) As such he is *life-giving* (Matt. 16 : 16), the Creator of **heaven, and earth, and the sea**, the three divisions of the universe, to each of which the heathen assigned its particular god. The words are quoted from Ps. 146 : 6. That they could turn by repentance to the living God was indeed glad tidings.

16. He accounts for their ignorance of the true God. **Who in times past**—rather, *who in generations or ages gone by*. The *ages* are the spaces of time of about thirty-three years, ordinarily occupied by each successive generation. (Col. 1 : 26.) **Suffered**—mildly implying their responsibility for their ignorance and idolatry. (Rom. 1 : 20-23.)

All nations, or *all the Gentiles*, since the reference is to all outside of Israel. **To walk in their own ways**—in idolatry which they themselves began. Their superstitions and courses of life accorded with their own desires and tastes. These were the ages of ignorance, at which God winked. (17 : 30.)

17. Nevertheless—the heathen were not guiltless, since **he left not himself without witness** of his existence, his power, and his goodness, and hence of their dependence on and obligation to him. This "lies at the foundation of his argument for proving the accountability of the heathen in Rom. 1 : 19, f." (HACKETT.) Compare Rom. 2 : 12-15, where Paul states that God also gave an internal moral witness of himself. How God left himself not without witness is briefly outlined : In that **he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts with food and gladness**. Notice the reference to rain in a province where water is so scarce that it is said to have been sometimes sold for money. Notice also that it is the *hearts* and not the stomachs that are filled and abundantly satisfied. The mind or soul is regarded as the seat of all enjoyment. Such blessings, productive of such joy, should lead the heart upward in gratitude to God. This address is worthy of study, on account of its adroitness and carefulness in treating the idolatry of the people, being suited to produce conviction without irritation. "It is a strong though incidental proof of authenticity, that when the apostles addressed heathen hearers, unacquainted even with the Hebrew Scriptures, they begin with the truths of natural theology, and not by appealing to the prophecies or proving the Messiahship of Jesus, as they did in their ad-

19 ^γ And there came thither *certain Jews* from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, ^α and, having stoned Paul, drew *him* out of the city, ^β supposing he had been dead. Howbeit, as the disci-

ples stood around about him, he rose up, and came into the city.

21 And the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe. And when they had preached the gospel to that city,

^γ ch. 13 : 45.

^α 2 Cor. 11 : 25 ; 2 Tim. 3 : 11.

^β 2 Cor. 11 : 23.

dresses to the Jews. (2 : 16-36, etc.) ” (ALEXANDER.)

18. The result attained. **With these sayings** *they with difficulty restrained the multitude from sacrificing to them.* The expression is a strong and vivid one. It is taken for granted that Paul and Barnabas claimed to have wrought the miracle through the power of their risen Lord.

19-28. PAUL AND BARNABAS PROCEEDED TO DERBE, AND THEN RETRACE THEIR STEPS TO ANTIOCH, IN SYRIA. The stoning of Paul. (2 Cor. 11 : 25.) probably the winter and summer of A. D. 47.

19. **Jews from Antioch and Iconium**, who had been the means of driving the missionaries from their cities. The news of their preaching and of healing the cripple had spread even to Antioch of Pisidia, more than a hundred miles distant. All this took time, and also gave time for the revolution of feeling at Lystra, which is now to be described. This would probably take them into the winter of A. D. 47. **Persuaded the people**—doubtless misrepresenting what Paul and Barnabas had done at Antioch and Iconium ; telling how they had been expelled from those cities, and perhaps imputing their miraculous power to evil spirits. (Matt. 12 : 24) By such means they got the consent and active co-operation of **the people, the multitude.** The more exact translation, *having persuaded the multitude and having stoned Paul*, gives more clearly the meaning. These Jews were not only the instigators of an infuriated mob, but also the leaders in the stoning. This agrees with the fact that stoning was a Jewish punishment ; and they had no scruple in inflicting it in a heathen city. Not so at Jerusalem. (7 : 58) This change of feeling agrees with the reputation of the Lycaonians, who are said to have been proverbially fickle and faithless. Paul refers to his experience in 2 Cor. 11 : 25, “Once was I

stoned.” The agreement of Paul with the Acts, as well as the Jewish mode of execution in a heathen city, under the leadership of Jews, go to show the accuracy of Luke. **Drew**—rather *dragged him out of the city*, not for burial, but for exposure. As for burial, his friends and disciples could attend to that. **Supposing he had been dead**, or *that he had died*, although he was not actually dead.

20. **Howbeit**, etc. *But the disciples having encircled, or gathered about him*, after his persecutors had left him. They had anxiously watched the proceedings, perhaps had attended the crowd, or followed close after. They gather sorrowfully around Paul, not to bury, but to ascertain his condition. This shows that his work had not been in vain in Lystra. Among them possibly stood young Timothy, who probably witnessed this persecution. (16 : 1 ; 2 Tim. 3 : 11.) Perhaps here he consecrated his life to ministerial service. Contrast the Master left alone at Gethsemane. (Mark 14 : 50.), and Paul surrounded with sympathizing disciples. **He rose up and came into the city**—showing himself probably only to the converts. Some suppose that Paul was only stunned, or that he swooned ; and that rising up and going into the city does not necessarily imply his usual activity and vigor. Yet his sudden restoration, so as to be able to travel the next day after such an outrage, would seem to be miraculous. **With Barnabas**—who appears to have suffered no violence. Paul was more positive and aggressive against heathenism and Judaism ; he was also the chief speaker, and the one to suffer. **Derbe.** See on ver. 6.

21. At Derbe and its vicinity, Paul and Barnabas reached the extreme limit of this missionary journey. It is probably winter, and they continue their labors here till spring. **When they had preached the gospel to**

^b and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch, ^c confirming the souls of the disciples, and ^d exhorting them to continue

in the faith, and that ^e we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. And when they had ^f ordained them ^g elders in every church, and had

^b Matt. 28 : 19. ^c ch. 18 : 23; Isa. 35 : 3; 1 Thess. 3 : 2-4. ^d ch. 11 : 23; 13 : 43; Col. 1 : 23. ^e Matt. 10 : 21, 22, 38; Luke 22 : 28, 29; John 16 : 1, 2, 33; Rom. 8 : 17; 2 Tim. 2 : 11, 12; 3 : 12; 1 Peter 4 : 12-16. ^f ch. 1 : 22; 2 Tim. 2 : 2; Titus 1 : 5. ^g ch. 11 : 30.

that city. The idea suggested is, that this was thoroughly done. **And had taught many**—rather, made numerous disciples. Of whom Gains was probably one. (20:4.) In each of the principal cities they visit they gather a congregation of believers. At Derbe they appear to labor successfully and quietly, spending some time, but affording "little historical material, according to the adage, that the best times to live in are the worst to write about." (ALEXANDER.) **They returned again**—rather, *they turned back to Lystra*, etc. Instead of continuing their journey by the nearest way to Antioch, in Syria, through Cilicia and Tarsus, they prefer to retrace their steps, visiting the churches they had organized, notwithstanding all the persecutions that had befallen them. This suggests also, that some time had elapsed, allowing the hostility aroused against the missionaries to wear away, and giving opportunity to the churches to gain experience and develop character.

22. The reasons are given for turning back through the cities where they had been persecuted. **Confirming the souls of the disciples**—*establishing, or strengthening*, not by any outward rite, but by their presence, their instruction and words of encouragement. The word is found elsewhere in the New Testament. (15:32, 41; 18:23.) How they confirmed the souls of the disciples is brought into view. It was by **exhorting** (11:23) **them to continue in the faith** of the gospel, which they had recently embraced, and which was both a *belief* and a *life* of faith. (Col. 1:23.) **And that we must, through much tribulation, or through many afflictions, enter into the kingdom of God.** A statement of a general fact in the experience of Christians. (2 Tim. 3:12.) And if these afflictions were necessary in a wicked

world as inseparably connected with our fallen state, and as a means of discipline and in accordance with God's will, then these disciples should not be deterred by them, but should be ready to cheerfully endure them. (Rom. 5:3-5; Heb. 12:11.) The phrase *the kingdom of God* embraces the whole mediatorial reign of Christ, sometimes viewed in its beginnings on earth (1:3), and sometimes in its consummation, the state of future happiness. The latter appears to be the meaning here. Alford suggests that **we** as used here indicates that Luke rejoined the apostles at the Pisidian Antioch, where he remained during the journey to Derbe and back. There is no evidence, however, outside of this that Luke was with Paul in this missionary tour. Others regard the phrase, *that we must*, etc., as a quotation of words uttered by the preachers. Such a change from the indirect to the direct discourse is characteristic of Luke's style. That they should have said *we* instead of *you* was especially appropriate, since the missionaries had been sharers with these disciples in afflictions and persecutions, and in a general sense would continue to be so. In their sympathies with the afflictions of these converts they make them one with themselves. "Carry the cross with a willing heart and it will guide thee to the place where thy sorrows will end, and where thou wilt find all for which thy soul hath longed." (THOMAS AQUINAS.)

23. **When they had ordained them elders**—*having elected or appointed for them elders*. The later ecclesiastical meaning of this verb, *to ordain by the laying on of hands*, is not found in the New Testament. It properly means *to vote by stretching out the hand*, as practiced in the Athenian assemblies. It is found elsewhere in the New Testament only in 2 Cor. 8:19, in which it is said that Titus had

been "*chosen of, or appointed by the churches to travel with us.*" It is also found in the later and spurious subscriptions of 2 Tim. 4 : 23 and Titus 3 : 15, meaning to *appoint*. With a preposition prefixed, it is found in 10 : 41, "*chosen, or appointed, before of God.*" While the meaning of the verb did pass into any kind of appointment without regard to method, whether by vote, lot, or otherwise, there does not appear here "any reason," in the words of Dr. Alford, "for departing from the usual meaning of electing by show of hands." So also Dr. Meyer, who says, "The analogy of 6 : 2-4 requires this strict regard to the purposely chosen word, which, resting on the old method of choice by lifting the hand . . . forbids the general rendering, they *appointed*, or *chose*, so that the appointment would have taken place simply by apostolic plenary power, although the word itself might denote to *choose generally* without that special mode. Paul and Barnabas *chose by vote* elders for them, that is, they conducted their selection by vote in the churches." It must remain uncertain whether they were first selected by the churches and then approved by the apostles, or first selected by the apostles and then approved by the churches, or selected by the united action of the churches and apostles. The choosing of the seven (6 : 5, 6) favors the first, while the sending out of Barnabas and Paul from Antioch favors the last. (18 : 2.) **Elders.** (See on 11 : 30.) **In every church**—used distributively, indicating succession, following one another, *church by church*. The phrase does not necessarily imply a plurality of elders in each church, although such may be its meaning, and is in harmony with the fact that there were several elders in the church at Ephesus (20 : 17), and also at Philippi and elsewhere. (Titus 1 : 5-7; 1 Th. 1 : 1.) In churches extending throughout a city and surrounding country, having several private houses as places of religious meetings, it was needful to have several elders, overseers, or pastors. Plurality of elders was then also necessary, since the liability to persecution necessitated the disciples to meet in small companies

and in different places. Each company needed a leader. The time that had elapsed since Paul and Barnabas had founded these churches gave opportunity for the development of gifts and character among the membership. Both the churches and the missionaries were better prepared than at the first to select the proper men as church officers. Doubtless Paul, as an apostle, had much to do in suggesting and directing the choice. The churches would naturally follow their advice. Clement (ch. 44) gives us an apostolic tradition of men chosen, or appointed to the ministry by apostles, or other eminent men, with "the consent of the whole church." It may be added that as the seven were set apart with laying on of hands (6 : 6), and also Paul and Barnabas to their missionary work, so in like manner these elders were probably set apart, though there is nothing in this account to indicate it.

From a comparison of other passages of Scripture it is evident that elders were pastors and teachers (1 Cor. 12 : 28, 30; Eph. 4 : 11), and that it was their special work to teach. (1 Tim. 3 : 2; Titus 1 : 9.) They were ministers of the word, and the Lord conferred upon them different gifts (Rom. 12 : 6-8; 1 Cor. 12 : 1, 4-7), though these gifts might meet in the same person. (2 Tim. 4 : 2.) Where there was a plurality of elders or pastors, these different gifts fitted them for such variety of work as the various conditions found in a large congregation demanded. (1 Peter 4 : 10, 11.) Such a plurality would often meet the conditions of large churches at the present day. It seems also evident that they possessed some authority as proclaimers of the truth, and as executive officers, in presiding over and conducting the spiritual affairs of the church. (11 : 30; 15 : 2; 1 Tim. 5 : 17.) The last passage is especially in point: "Let the elders that rule (or *preside*) well be counted worthy of double honor (and support, Deut. 25 : 4), especially they who labor (*with wearisome effort*) in word and teaching." The meaning is not that there were ruling elders distinguished from teaching elders, but that those who excel in taking charge of church affairs, or in teaching, or in both, have

^b prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.
 24 And after they had passed throughout
 25 Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia. And when they had preached the word in

Perga, they went down into Attalia.
 26 And thence [they] sailed to Antioch,
ⁱ from whence they had been ^k recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled.

^b ch. 13 : 1-3.

ⁱ ch. 13 : 1, 3.

^k ch. 15 : 40.

a double claim to honor and support. It may be further said that while Paul prescribes the qualifications of bishops, or elders, and deacons in the third chapter of First Timothy, he nowhere speaks of the qualifications of the ruling elders. Moreover, the post-apostolic churches had no such office, which seems unaccountable if it was appointed by the apostles. Indeed, it was never known until the sixteenth century, when Calvin originated it.

A comparison of Scripture also shows that besides the apostles there are only two orders of church officers. The apostles were chosen by our Lord for a special purpose, and had no successors. (See on 1 : 22.) Besides these were the elders, or bishops, or overseers, and the deacons. Thus in Phil. 1 : 1 Paul addresses the "bishops" or *overseers* "and deacons," in such a way as to make it evident that these included all the church officers at Philippi. And in instructing Timothy in regard to the qualifications of church officers, he only mentions bishops and deacons. (1 Tim. 3 : 1-10.) If there had been any other church officers he would naturally have spoken of them. To the question why here and elsewhere in the Acts deacons are not mentioned, except at the appointment of the seven (6 : 2-4), it may be answered : 1. It was an office inferior to that of elder, or bishop. 2. The apostles in connection with the churches appointed the elders, but the appointment of deacons was left to the church in connection with their pastors, or elders. (See on 11 : 30 and 20 : 18, 28.)

And had prayed with fasting, rather the plural, *with fastings*, indicating the successive fasts in the several churches. Some join this phrase with the preceding verb *appointed*, and regard the prayer and fasting as implying the ordinations of the elders. (13 : 3.) Others, such as Meyer and Hackett, more accurately connect these exercises with the verb *commended*

which follows. **Commended**, or *committed*, **them to the Lord** for protection and safety. **Them**—the believers generally, and not merely the elders, as is evident from the words, **on whom they believed**. Thus the prayers and fastings seem to have been connected with their farewell meetings.

24. Paul and Barnabas pass through **Pisidia**, taking Antioch, the capital of the province, on their way. (See 13 : 14.) The summer of A. D. 47 was probably spent in visiting and fully equipping the churches with pastors. As autumn came on they probably descended to the lower lands of the province of **Pamphylia**. (See on 13 : 13.)

25. **When they had preached—rather, And having spoken the word in Perga.** (See on 13 : 13.) This would seem to have been their first preaching there. They had previously landed there, and had gone at once into Pisidia to Antioch. **Attalia**—a city of Pamphylia at the mouth of the river Catarrhactes, about sixteen miles from Perga, built by Attalus Philadelphus, king of Pergamos, and named after him. The place was of considerable importance in the days of Paul, and still continues to exist as a seaport town by the name of Satalia. It is beautifully situated round a small harbor, and built on the ascending banks. It would seem that Paul did not stop to preach here.

26. **And thence sailed away**, implying a voyage of some distance, **to Antioch**, the capital of the Roman province in Syria. (See on 11 : 19.) "They may have disembarked at Seleucia, as the town and its port are one in such designations. (DR. HACKETT.) (See on 13 : 4.) **Whence they had been recommended**—better, *commended*, or *committed to the favor of God* in performing the work which they had accomplished. (See on 13 : 2, 3.) It was probably now late in the autumn of A. D. 47, this missionary journey of Paul and Barnabas having occupied about two

27 And when they were come, ¹and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them,

and how he had ²opened the door of 28 faith unto the Gentiles. And there they abode long time with the disciples.

¹ ch. 15 : 4-6, 12 ; 21 : 19, 22.

² 1 Cor. 16 : 9 ; 2 Cor. 2 : 12 ; Col. 4 : 3.

and a half years. Some suppose a shorter period ; but if anything it was longer rather than shorter. (Compare *Harmonic Arrangement of the Acts*, § 27.)

27. Assembling the church at Antioch, Paul and Barnabas report **all that God had done with them**, during their two or three years' missionary labors abroad. *With them*. Some take this to mean *in their behalf*, as in Luke 1 : 72, according to a Hebrew usage. But there seems to be no necessity for supposing a Hebraism here, and it is natural and more simple to take the phrase to mean, *God working with them*. This also accords with Paul's declaration in 1 Cor. 3 : 9, "We are workers together with God." (See 2 Cor. 6 : 1.) **How he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles**—a beautiful phrase signifying that the Gentiles had been admitted to share in the hopes of the gospel. This figurative use of *door* as an avenue of access, is a favorite one with Paul, as for the preaching the gospel at Ephesus (1 Cor. 16 : 9), at Troas (2 Cor. 2 : 12), and for general evangelization (Col. 4 : 3), and Luke may have become familiar with this use of the word from his intercourse with Paul. It was a door of *faith*, both because an opportunity had been given to the Gentiles for believing, and also because through the influence of the Holy Spirit a willingness to believe the gospel had been awakened. (16 : 11.) The result of the mission showed that access to Christ was as free to Gentiles as to Jews.

28. **And they abode long time**—rather, *tarried no little time, with the disciples*, which is sufficiently indefinite and comprehensive to include a period of two or three years. The so-called Apostolic Council at Jerusalem was held in A. D. 50. According to our chronology it was now late in the year A. D. 47. Paul and Barnabas could find much to do after an absence of two and a half years from the church at Antioch. Besides, there was a large

field outside, in that large city and its vicinity. The name **disciples** here used may suggest, as Dr. Alexander thinks, that they might still be regarded as *learners* and requiring teachers, such as these two noted missionaries, for no little time. They would also foster a mission spirit in the church.

PRACTICAL REMARKS.

1. The preacher should give special attention to the manner of his preaching, as well as to the matter. (Ver 1 ; Col. 1 : 28.)

2. In doing God's work we must expect the opposition of the wicked. (Ver. 2 ; Matt. 10 : 24, 25.)

3. Opposition should not discourage, since it is often attended with signal success. (Ver. 3 ; 12 : 24.)

4. The gospel is the divider of hearts and of communities. (Ver. 4 ; Matt. 10 : 34-36.)

5. It is not the fault of the gospel if it arouses division and tumults. (Ver. 5 ; John 3 : 19, 20.)

6. No one in Christ's service should needlessly expose himself to death. When to flee and when to face persecution needs wise discretion. (Ver. 6 ; John 5 : 16, 17 ; 8 : 59.)

7. Hostility to the gospel often becomes the means of the increase of believers. (Ver. 6, 7 ; 8 : 4.)

8. It was fitting that the first messengers of the gospel among the heathen, and the truth they preached, should be attested by miracles. (Ver. 8-10 ; Mark 16 : 17.)

9. A preparation of heart is needed for the reception of divine blessings. (Ver. 9 ; Hosea 10 : 12.)

10. The healing of the lame man illustrates the power of the gospel upon the soul. (Ver. 10 ; Isa. 35 : 6, 10.)

11. Miracles are not the means for converting the soul. (Ver. 11 ; Luke 16 : 31.)

12. Paganism deified heroes ; Christianity exalts the humble and contrite to be sons of God, and heirs of the kingdom. (Ver. 12 ; Rom. 8 : 14-17.)

13. People even in our day and country may be converted to a pastor rather than to Christ. The glorifying of the creature is

the essence of idolatry. (Ver. 13; Rom. 1: 25.)

14. The word of God gives no countenance to the worship of saints. (Ver. 14, 15; 10: 25, 26.)

15. None feel their infirmities more than faithful ministers, who point men to the living God. (Ver. 15; 2 Cor. 4: 5, 7.)

16. Men, if left to themselves, tend to spiritual darkness and error. By the long delay of the gospel God showed how helpless was the race without the light of his word. (Ver. 16; Eccles. 7: 20.)

17. God has left no one without sufficient evidence of his power, goodness, and Providence. (Ver. 17; Ps. 145: 9, 16.)

18. The strong adhesion of men to idolatry and superstition is an evidence of the depravity of the heart. (Ver. 18; Rom. 1: 28.)

19. How fickle the world! How changeable the experiences of men! Paul consented to the stoning of Stephen, and now is stoned himself. (Ver. 19; Matt. 21: 9; 27: 22, 23.)

20. The restored Paul to the new converts was an encouragement and an inspiration, as one from the dead. (Ver. 20; 1 Thess. 2: 10, 12.)

21. There are times when we should not count our lives dear to us, if we can only reach men with the gospel. (Ver. 21; 20: 24.)

22. Tribulations are often necessary to Christians to win them from the world, to keep them in the path of duty, and make them partakers with Christ. (Ver. 22; 2 Tim. 2: 12; John 16: 33; Rev. 7: 14.)

23. The work of the minister is to preach the gospel, make disciples, strengthen them in the faith, and comfort them in affliction. (Ver. 21-23; Col. 1: 28, 29.)

24. Pastors are necessary for the full equipment and well-being of churches. (Ver. 23; Eph. 4: 11-13; Heb. 13: 17.)

25. In journeying we should recommend Christ to others as we have opportunity. (Ver. 25; Rom. 15: 18-21.)

26. A rehearsal of God's work is fitted to comfort and strengthen God's people. (Ver. 26, 27; Ps. 126.)

27. A church under Christ is the highest authority in his kingdom on earth. (Ver. 26, 27; Matt. 18: 17-20.)

28. A foreign missionary may sometimes find work at home. (Ver. 28.)

Ch. 15: This chapter is one of the most important in the Acts, treating of a question and its results, which decided that Christianity was intended equally for all men, instead of being a mere sect of Judaism, a religion of a party, or any one nation. The chapter opens with the occasion and origin of the Conference or so-called council, at Jerusalem; and narrates the journey of the delegates from Antioch, and their reception by the Jerusalem church. The Conference assembles, and Peter, Paul, Barnabas, and James, our Lord's brother, take special part, and matters are adjusted in a manner pleasing to the apostles, elders, and the whole church. The results are embodied in a letter, sent to Antioch by Paul, Barnabas, Judas, Silas, and others, and are highly satisfactory there. After a time Paul and Barnabas propose to return to their missionary work, which gives occasion to a discussion between them regarding Mark (ver. 36-38), and results in Barnabas going to his work in Cyprus, and Paul starting on his second missionary tour through Syria and Cilicia.

1-29. THE APOSTOLIC CONFERENCE AT JERUSALEM. (Gal. 2: 1-10; James 1: 1; Isa. 45: 21; Jer. 12: 15; Amos. 9: 11, 12.)

This probably occurred in the autumn of A. D. 50. Some would put it in the spring of A. D. 51. It is generally agreed that Paul refers to this same visit to Jerusalem in Gal. 2: 1-10. The time, place, theme of controversy, the leaders of the opposing sides, and the peaceful results are the same in both. That in the second chapter of Galatians could not have been earlier, for then there would have been no need of this Conference; and the results of the Conference certainly preclude the necessity of such a visit of Paul afterward to Jerusalem. The differences between the two accounts in the Acts and the Galatian Epistle are easily adjusted. Luke records a controversy which was threatening to make a division between Jewish and Gentile Christianity. Paul relates a personal experience touching his official and doctrinal relations to the other apostles. But both have reference to circumcision, Paul's attitude toward it, and its rela-

The apostolic Conference, or Council at Jerusalem.

15 And certain men which came down

from Judæa taught the brethren, *and said,*
 *Except ye be circumcised ^{after the}
 manner of Moses, †ye cannot be saved.

* Gal. 2:4, 12.

† Rom. 4:8-12; Gal. 5:1-4; Phil. 3:2, 3; Col. 2:8, 11, 16.

‡ Gen. 17:10; Lev. 12:3.

§ 1 Cor. 7:18, 19; Gal. 5:6; 6:13-16.

tion to Gentile converts. Luke gives an account of the public meeting of the Conference; Paul of a private interview with the apostles. A public gathering, if not implied by Paul, is consistent with his account, and the same may be said in regard to a private meeting by Luke. Other differences will be noted below. (See fuller discussion in *Harmonic Arrangement of the Acts*, p. 197, § 28.)

This Conference has usually been styled, *The Apostolic Council*. Yet it differed from a council, in that it did not include delegates from the churches. It does not appear that there were any from the churches of Judæa (Gal. 1:22), or Cilicia. (Ver 23.) The brethren from Antioch came to inquire into the matter, and represent the interests of the Antioch church; but it does not appear that they acted officially by vote as a part of the Conference. The public gathering seems to have been a church meeting of the Jerusalem church in connection with the apostles, pastors, and preachers. Another difference from modern councils was the presence of inspired men. (Ver 6:28.) It seems however, to have been the germ and partly the model of councils afterward. It is also highly suggestive and instructive in reference to the treatment of church controversies and church difficulties.

1. This verse is closely connected with the last verse of the preceding chapter, and shows what *occasioned* the Conference at Jerusalem. **Certain men**—they are not called disciples, or believers, or brethren, which is significant, inasmuch as Paul designates such ones as *false brethren unwares brought in*. (Gal 2:4.) **Came down from Judæa**—probably from Jerusalem. (11:12. See on ver. 5.) They had come on their own private responsibility. (Ver 24.) **Taught**—were teaching, as they had opportunity from time to time. They were teachers, or represented themselves as such. **The brethren**—

the Gentile believers who were addressed. **Except ye be circumcised, etc., ye cannot be saved.** This is a brief summary of what they taught. Circumcision stands here for the whole law (ver. 24), just as John's baptism is sometimes put for his whole ministry. (1:22.) Circumcision was ordained of God in his covenant with Abraham (Gen. 17:10 f.) to be performed on all his male descendants, the eighth day after birth. It was confirmed by the law of Moses. (Lev. 12:3; Josh 5:2-9.) When a Gentile submitted to circumcision it was a sign of submission to the whole law. (Gal. 5:3.) The burning question among apostolic churches was the condition upon which Gentiles were to be received into membership. This gave rise to the first famous controversy of Christianity regarding circumcision and the keeping of the law, which, in general interest and important results, has been likened to the controversy concerning the Person of Christ in the fourth century, and that concerning Justification by Faith in the Protestant Reformation. At first the apostles expected Gentiles to be converted to Judaism, and then to Christianity. But Peter and the rest were taught by the conversion of Cornelius, that this was not necessary, and the church at Jerusalem accepted this lesson. (See on 10:9 and 11:18.) But later as Gentile believers increased, and Antioch became the centre of missionary effort among the heathen, and Paul and Barnabas had large success in planting Gentile churches, a Judaizing faction, which had never received the conversion of Cornelius as final, became very outspoken. Being great sticklers for the law (ver. 5), questioning perhaps the case of Cornelius, or at least regarding it as only exceptional, they very naturally concluded that if a Gentile was converted to God, he would be obedient to his law. Going still further, they lost sight of an inward change through faith, and of spiritual service, and made cir-

2 When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them,

should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.
3 And being brought on their way by the church, they passed through Phenice

* Gal. ch. 2. * ch. 21 : 5; Rom. 15 : 24; 1 Cor. 16 : 6, 11.

cumcision and the external observance of the law conditions of salvation. And since Paul had become the leading defender of uncircumcised believers, he naturally became the object of their opposition and prejudice. They violently opposed his doctrine and his apostolic authority. (Gal. 2 : 4, 5)

2. Having noticed the occasion of the Conference, this verse, in connection with Gal. 2 : 2, shows how it originated, namely, from the Antioch church and by revelation. **No small dissension**—implying a strong and determined resistance by Paul and Barnabas. **And disputation**—*questionings*, implying debate concerning the doctrines and authority of these Judaizers. Paul could speak from authority, having been called to the Gentile work, and having received the gospel by revelation. (Gal. 1 : 11, 12.) It seems that these legalists produced considerable excitement at Antioch, but it is not implied that they formed a party, or obtained any followers. They would likely produce some impression on the Jewish portion of the church and create doubt in their minds. They would naturally question the authority of Paul, who was the foremost defender of the law of liberty, **They**—referring generally and somewhat indefinitely to the officers and other members of the Antioch church. **Determined**—ordered that Paul and Barnabas . . . should go. It also appears that Paul “went up by revelation.” (Gal. 2 : 2.) Which preceded we are not told. Paul may have hesitated to submit his divinely received gospel to any man, and hence may have needed a divine suggestion. It was revealed to him to go to Jerusalem and make known to the apostles the gospel he preached to the Gentiles and to receive their approval and right hand of fellowship. (Gal. 2 : 2-10.) He may, therefore, have suggested the Conference, or at least heartily approved of it, if suggested by others. This two-

fold origin of the Conference was not singular in the life of Paul. Thus the brethren at Jerusalem sent him to Tarsus (9 : 30), and the Lord, by vision, at the same time, sent him to the Gentiles. (22 : 21.) So Peter was sent for and also directed by the Spirit to go to Cornelius. (10 : 19, 20.) **And certain others of them**—Paul took Titus with him as a specimen of Gentile Christianity and as a test case regarding circumcision. (Gal. 2 : 3.) He was probably also appointed by the church as a delegate. The character of the delegates indicates that the mind of the Antioch church was on the side of the Gentile believers and of the law of liberty. **To the apostles and elders about this question.** Notice that while great regard was had for the mother church at Jerusalem, where the gifts of the Spirit had been largely bestowed, nothing is here said regarding her. These delegates are sent to consult with the *apostles*, who were inspired men, and the *elders*, who were *teachers* under them, and doubtless enjoying in large measure the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Observe also that nothing is said of Peter, who, according to the Roman Catholic theory, was the infallible guide of the church, and that Peter in Gal. 2 : 8 is only regarded as the apostle to the circumcision, and that James took the most prominent part in the Conference.

3. **And being brought on their way by the church**—they were publicly escorted as a mark of respect and affection and of interest in this important journey. This is another evidence that the Antioch church was on the side of Paul and Barnabas. Probably as many of its members as could conveniently assemble accompanied the delegates a certain distance out of the city, and then took leave of them with prayers and best wishes. Such escortings were common among early Christians. (20 : 38; 21 : 5; 3 John 6.) **Phenice**—Phenicia. (See on 11 : 19.) **Samaria**

and Samaria, [†]declaring the conversion of the Gentiles; and they caused great joy unto all the brethren. And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and of the apostles and elders, and [‡]they declared all things that God had done with them.

5 ^{*}But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, [‡]That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command *them* to keep the law of 6 Moses. And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter.

[†] ch. 14 : 27.

[‡] ver. 12; ch. 21 : 19.

^{*} Gal. 2 : 4.

[‡] ver. 1.

—the country between Galilee and Judea. "As Galilee is not mentioned they traveled probably along the coast as far south as Ptolemais (21:7), and then crossed the plain of Esdraelon into Samaria." (Dr. HACKETT.) **Declaring, relating fully** (13:41), **the conversion of the Gentiles**, to the churches in those regions. They could give abundant proof that Gentiles could be converted without circumcision, not only in Antioch, but also in Antioch of Pisidia, and other places. They were not going to Jerusalem to learn that fact, but rather to prove it and have it publicly and formally acknowledged. **They caused great joy unto all the brethren**—whether Jews, proselytes, or Samaritans. The brethren in Samaria would not, of course, sympathize with Jewish prejudices, and in Phœnicia believers were largely under Gentile influences, and their opinions doubtless modified thereby.

4. They were received—*welcomed* (Luke 8 : 40), according to the reading of some good manuscripts. A slightly different reading, however, is found in the oldest manuscripts and preferred by many critics, meaning that they were properly and honorably *received*. This reception was by the church at Jerusalem in general, and the apostles and elders, to whom they were specially sent for consultation. (Ver. 2.) **They declared all things**—*they reported what great things God had wrought with them*, in the conversion of the Gentiles. And Titus was with them. (Gal. 2 : 3.) This may have occurred at one of their worshipping assemblies. (See on 14 : 27.)

5. Thus far there seems to have been no note of disapprobation from the Jerusalem church. Nor could there have been consistently with their former cordial assent and approval of Gentile conversions. (11:18.) **But**

there rose up, etc. This belongs to the narrative of Luke, who records that at this very first meeting with the church at Jerusalem Paul and Barnabas met the same opposition which they had encountered at Antioch. It came from *some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed*, who, as such, were still sticklers for the law. They had been formalists out of the church and they were legalists within it. Some of them had doubtless known Paul as a Jewish leader and, like him, had found in Jesus the Messiah, but their conversion was not so deep and thorough as his. **Pharisees.** (See on 5 : 34.) Notice Paul's reference to these persons in Gal. 2 : 4. **It is needful**—implying duty and obligation. **To circumcise them**—the Gentile believers. Thus it is evident that Paul and Barnabas had related the conversion of the Gentiles to the congregation, but it is not necessary to suppose that they had referred to the opposition they had encountered at Antioch. **And to command them to keep the law of Moses**—this would naturally follow the submission of Gentile converts to circumcision. (See on ver. 1.) Notice also the difference in the putting of the injunction in ver. 1 and here. There the Judaizing teachers enjoin on the Gentile converts circumcision, as necessary and voluntary on their part. Here the Pharisaic brethren affirm that Paul and other teachers must enjoin circumcision and the keeping of the law on their Gentile converts. "If the Pharisaic party had triumphed the Christian church had been buried in the grave of Judaism." (ABBOTT.) Here may have occurred the demand for the circumcision of Titus indirectly mentioned in Gal. 2 : 3.

6. The private interview of Paul with the apostles, recorded in Gal. 2 : 2-10, probably took place between the reception of the delegates from

7 And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them,
² Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among

us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe
 8 And God, ^a which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, ^b giving them the

^a ch. 10 : 20; 11 : 12-18.

^a ch. 1 : 24; see refs. 1 Sam. 16 : 7.

^b ch. 10 : 44.

Antioch recorded in the two last verses and the public Conference related in this and succeeding verses. Paul fully made known to the apostles his views of the gospel and his ministry among the Gentiles, and gave them such facts as would enable them to judge impartially regarding himself and his work, and the law of Christian liberty. **And the apostles and elders came together**—Peter and John (Gal. 2 : 9), and perhaps others of the Twelve were there; James, the Lord's brother, Paul and Barnabas, Titus (Gal. 2 : 3), Judas, and Silas. (Ver. 12.) The words, "all the multitude" (ver. 12), implies that the members of the church were generally present. Moreover, the statement "then pleased it the apostles and elders *with the whole church*" (ver. 22) further implies that the members of the church were present, not only to listen, but also to participate in the final action. The objection that there was no place large enough to hold them is worthless, since we know nothing of the place of their meeting, and it is not necessary to suppose that every member was present. "The *official presence of all* is assumed continually in such cases, where the assembly is *open to all*," (ALFORD.) These elders were not connected with the churches of Judea, for of this we have no intimation, but with the church at Jerusalem. They were ministers of the word, and teachers (ver. 32), with that diversity of gifts needed by the large and quite extended Jerusalem church. (See on ver. 2, and 14 : 23.) Thus this gathering was of the nature of a Conference, rather than of a Council. Very probably James presided over it. (Ver. 13, 19.) **To consider this matter**—literally, *this word* or doctrine, with reference to preaching the gospel to the Gentiles.

7. The Conference began with **much disputing**, with *considerable preliminary debate* (ver. 2), confined very probably to the apostles and elders, in which the whole relation of the law to

the gospel came naturally under review. There would seem to have been some present who opposed Paul's methods, and favored circumcision and the keeping of the law among Gentile converts. At length **Peter rose up and said unto them**. Only those speeches which closed the debate are reported. How vividly must Peter have remembered the time and the scene, when he himself was called to an account at Jerusalem for associating with and eating with the uncircumcised Cornelius. (11 : 1-3.) But this experience enabled him to speak freely and with confidence on this occasion. **Ye know how a good while ago**—*from ancient or early days*. This expression is used comparatively to the whole time in which Christianity had existed. It was now over twenty years since the resurrection of Jesus, and about twelve years since the conversion of Cornelius. Those were the days of gospel beginnings and of old methods; since then there had been a wide extension of the work, and new plans and methods adopted. **God made choice among us**—or *among you*, according to the oldest manuscripts. Thus it was God who was the author of this work among the Gentiles. Peter would not restrict the work to himself. God had merely chosen him for that special occasion. This was known to his hearers, and as one so honored of God he could so far speak with authority, from revelation, from observation, and experience, that Gentiles did both hear the gospel and **believe** in Jesus as the Messiah, and that God did approve by the gift of the Spirit. It should be borne in mind that this discussion was not to bring about an agreement among inspired men, but rather to bring certain other brethren to the same conclusion with them. (Gal. 2 : 9.)

8. Moreover, **God who knoweth the heart bare them witness**—Cornelius and his company who believed. God knew their hearts and

9 Holy Spirit, even as *he did* unto us; ^c and put no difference between us and them,
 10 ^d purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore ^e why tempt ye God, ^f to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which

neither our fathers nor we were able to
 11 bear? But ^g we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.
 12 Then all the multitude kept silence,

^c Rom. 10 : 11 ; Gal. 3 : 28. ^d ch. 10 : 15, 28, 43 ; 1 Peter 1 : 22. ^e Exod. 17 : 2. ^f Matt. 23 : 4 ; Gal. 5 : 1. ^g Rom. 5 : 20, 21 ; Eph. 2, 8 ; Titus, 3 : 4, 5.

could not be deceived. (1 Sam 16 : 7) **Giving them the Holy Spirit even as he did unto us.** Thus God bare witness by the miraculous gifts of the Spirit (10 : 44), just as he had to Jewish believers on the day of Pentecost. (2 : 3, 4, 38.)

9. **And put no difference between us and them**—the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile having been broken down by Christ. (Eph 2 : 14) **Purifying or cleansing their hearts by faith**—reminding us of the words to Peter, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common." (10 : 15) God made no distinction between Jew and Gentile after this heart-cleansing had taken place. These Gentile believers were not circumcised in the flesh, but circumcised in heart, the true circumcision. (Col. 2 : 11 ; Rom. 2 : 28, 29 ; Jer. 9 : 26.) **By faith** in Christ, accepting him personally as a Saviour. The Spirit employs the truth as an instrument in regeneration and sanctification. (James 1 : 18 ; John 17 : 17.)

10. **Now, therefore**—Peter makes the application. Since the heart-searching God had admitted Gentile converts to equal privileges with Jewish believers, granting that purification of heart, of which circumcision is but an emblem, **why tempt ye God?** Why put him to proof, whether he will maintain his manifest purpose, thus trying his forbearance and patience by opposing his will? (5 : 9 ; Matt. 4 : 7 ; Cor. 10 : 9.) **To put—that ye should put a yoke upon the necks of the disciples**, which God had pronounced needless by granting the Holy Spirit to the Gentiles. By the *yoke* is meant circumcision and the Mosaic laws. (Gal. 5 : 1, 3.) **Which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear.** Strong language. Compare the "heavy burdens" which Jesus denounces (Matt. 23 : 4) and the burden of the law on the conscience which Paul describes.

(Rom 7 : 7-11) Contrast Christ's easy yoke. (Matt. 11 : 29) Peter is here speaking of the law as a means and condition to salvation. Their *fathers* since the time of Moses, and they themselves, had found the law *unavailing* to give justification and peace of conscience. Its object was not to give salvation, but a knowledge of sin, and thus lead to Christ. (Rom 3 : 19-20 ; Gal 3 : 19-24.)

11. The question of Peter in the preceding verse implied that they had found the law an unbearable burden and unavailable as a means of salvation ; and that they should not therefore impose it upon Gentile believers. This was one side : Neither Gentiles nor Jews could hope to be saved by the law. The other side follows in this verse. **But**, on the other hand, in contrast to the yoke of the law, we expect through *grace* to be saved the same as Gentile believers. "The complete equilization of both parties is most fitly brought out at the close ; after having been previously said, *they as well as we*, it is now said, *we as well as they*. Thus the equalizing is formally complete." (MEYER.) **Grace** is emphatic : *But, through the grace of the Lord Jesus we believe that we shall be saved in the same manner as they.* The divine grace or favor in Christ did what the law, which was weak through the flesh, could not do. (Rom. 8 : 3-5.) Peter affirms salvation by grace briefly ; it remained for Paul to develop the doctrine fully. See how Paul used this same thought when he rebuked Peter for his inconsistency. (Gal. 2 : 11, f.) This, which was probably a summary of Peter's speech, made his argument complete, that circumcision and keeping the Mosaic law should not be imposed on Gentile converts.

12. This statement of facts regarding the conversion of Cornelius and his company under Peter, and his argument therefrom, produced such an impression

and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them.

13 And after they had held their peace.

¹ James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me; ² Simeon, ³ hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, ⁴ to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the

^b ch. 14 : 27. ⁱ ch. 12 : 17. ^k 2 Peter 1 : 1, Gr. ^l ver. 7-9. ^m ch. 18 : 10; John 11 : 52.

upon his hearers, that Paul and Barnabas at once follow with a rehearsal of similar facts in connection with their own labors among the Gentiles. The order of the words in the original is significant: *And silent became the multitude, and they listen to Barnabas and Paul.* The *multitude* indicates the assembled church. (ver. 22.) The *silence* shows that the long dissension had been pacified and arrested by Peter's address. So they are now ready to *listen* to the two first missionaries to the heathen, and accept from them any further evidence. It should be noted that **Paul**, who had acquired the first place as an apostle of the Gentiles (13 : 13, 46), here occupies the second place, when at Jerusalem among the brethren of the circumcision. But **Barnabas** was older and longer and more favorably known to the brethren at Jerusalem, and had introduced and recommended Paul to them. (9 : 27; Gal. 1 : 18-24.) And so Barnabas would naturally speak first. Besides, those who were jealous for the law would probably have less prejudice against Barnabas than against Paul. (21 : 20, 21.) Moreover, Paul would be the best one to close. They narrate how great **miracles**, rather, *signs and wonders* (2 : 22) God had wrought through them among the Gentiles, showing that their work and ministry had been attested by the same divine power as that among the Jews. Such signs and wonders would include the miraculous gifts of the Spirit as well as such miracles as those at Paphos and Lystra. (13 : 11; 14 : 3, 8-10.) It was not a mere repetition of what they had said at a former meeting (ver. 4), but a rehearsal of the evidences of God's approbation upon their ministry. The presence of Titus showed what kind of fruit their ministry had produced. (Gal. 2 : 3.)

13. After they had held their peace—were silent—the same verb as

in ver. 12. **James**—"our Lord's brother," (Gal. 1 : 19. See on 12 : 17.) He was a noted character in the Jerusalem church (Gal. 2 : 9), and, on account of his strict observance of the law, appears to have exerted great influence both among Jews and Christians. He seems to be styled an apostle in Gal. 1 : 19, although not among the Twelve. In later times Eusebius, Jerome, and others called Paul the thirteenth, and James the fourteenth apostle. The latter was pastor of the church at Jerusalem, and probably presided over this Conference. He was a fitting one to close this discussion.

14, 15. James first of all sanctions what Peter had said. In the report of this speech, notice how faithful Luke is to the Hebrew or rather Aramaic in which James spoke. **Simeon** or *Symeon*, the Jewish form of Simon, the original name of Peter (John 1 : 42), and the one familiar to the church at Jerusalem. (Luke 24 : 34.) This is the last mention of Peter in the Acts. From this onward, Paul rises in prominence, and the extension of the gospel among the Gentiles. Further concerning Peter, see on 12 : 17. **How God at the first**—rather, *at first*—pointing not only to "the good while ago" (ver. 7), but also to Peter as the first one to preach the gospel to the Gentiles as such. **Did visit**—or *look upon* in order to help. Hebraistic. **A people for his name**—to bear his name as his people. (Ver. 17; James 2 : 7.)

15. **To this agree**—the language of Peter and the prophets harmonize. Peter had related his experience. But the Jews were disposed to undervalue passing events, and pay superior reverence to the law and prophets. James accordingly clinches the arguments by appealing to **the words of the prophets**, which were many, one of which he particularly proceeds to quote. Thus not only had Paul and

words of the prophets; as it is written,
 16 'After this I will return, and will build
 again the tabernacle of David, which is
 fallen down; and I will build again the
 17 ruins thereof, and I will set it up; that
 the residue of men might seek after the

Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom
 my name is called, saith the Lord, who
 18 doeth all these things. 'Known unto God
 are all his works from the beginning of
 19 the world. Wherefore my sentence is,
 a that we trouble not them which from

a ver. 10, 24, 28.

Barnabas done what Peter had before
 been divinely directed to do; but it
 was in accordance with the divine plan
 as foretold by the prophets.

16. James quotes (Amos 9 : 11, 12), freely
 from the Septuagint, which was
 familiar to the foreign Jews present.
 The prophet had foretold the divine
 judgments against Israel, and now pre-
 dicts the restoration of the family of
 David in the person and reign of the
 Messiah, to whom his former subjects
 and the heathen shall render cheerful
 homage, and Israel shall be restored to
 their own land. The argument, as
 used by James, is, that God foretold
 that the Gentiles should bear his name,
 without any mention of their circum-
 cision; and with that agree the facts
 now reported to them. What is true of
 this, is true of other prophecies con-
 cerning the entering of Gentiles into
 the Messianic fold. **After this I will
 return and will build again.**
 Amos simply says, *In that day I will
 rebuild or raise up.* James introduces
 this prophecy thus freely, implying
 past judgments on Israel, and future
 restoration and prosperity; and uses
 "I will return" from Jer. 12 : 15. **The
 tabernacle, or tent,** suggests the low
 condition of David's royal family. The
 image is that of a *fallen tent* and one
 in **ruins**, broken and torn into frag-
 ments, which was a vivid picture of
 David's family in relation to the ten
 tribes of Israel in Amos' day. The
tabernacle of David does not mean
 what is sometimes styled the Jewish
 church. **I will build again**—the
 royal family of David, to whom God
 had promised that his "throne should
 be established forever." (2 Sam. 7 : 13; 1
 Kings 2 : 4; Ps. 89 : 3, 4.) Hence the angel
 announced the birth of Jesus with the
 promise, "The Lord shall give to him
 the throne of his father David, and he
 shall reign over the house of Jacob
 forever, and of his kingdom there
 shall be no end." (Luke 1 : 32, 33, note.) It

was by the risen and ascended Christ
 that the tabernacle of David was to be
 built, and the words of the prophet
 fulfilled, by extending his kingdom
 among the Gentiles.

17. The principal variation from the
 Hebrew is in this verse, which does not
 affect the essential idea of the passage,
 or the force of the argument. (Amos
 9 : 12.) Revised Version reads "That
 they may possess the remnant of Edom,
 and all the nations, which are called
 by my name, saith the Lord, that doeth
 this." The Edomites were among the
 bitterest enemies of Israel. The Sep-
 tuagint in its paraphrase (for such it is
 rather than a translation), regards
 Edom as a general representative of
 those who were strangers to God. **That
 the residue of men** expresses the
 design. The conquest is to be spirit-
 ual,—that they **might seek after the
 Lord**, even all the Gentiles upon
 whom **my name is called**, as my
 people. (Ver. 11; Deut. 28 : 10; Rom. 9 : 25, 26.)
 The assurance that all this would cer-
 tainly come to pass rests on the declar-
 ation of the **Lord, who doeth all
 these things.**

18. **Known unto God**, etc. This
 translation of the common text ex-
 presses anew, that the reception of
 Gentiles to gospel privileges was ac-
 cording to the divine purpose from the
 beginning. The words are those of
 James, and not of Amos. According
 to several of the oldest manuscripts,
 however, the words **unto God** are
all his works are omitted. The
 reading preferred by the highest criti-
 cal authorities, in connecting the pre-
 ceding verse, is: *Who doeth all these
 things, which were known by him from
 the beginning.* (Isa. 45 : 21.) The mean-
 ing of this shorter reading is substan-
 tially the same as that of the longer
 one above.

19. **Wherefore my sentence is**
 —*I judge.* It afterward became the
 judgment of the whole Conference.

among the Gentiles are turned to God :
20 but that we write unto them, that they

abstain ^ofrom pollutions of idols, and
^{from} fornication, and ^{from} things

^o ver. 29 ; Ezek. 20 : 30 ; 1 Cor. 8 : 1, 4-13 ; 10 : 29-22, 28 ; Rev. 2 : 14, 20. P 1 Cor. 6 : 9, 18 ;
Col. 3 : 5 ; 1 Peter 4 : 3.

(Ver. 22.) The phrase was a common formula, used by members of Greek assemblies, in giving their individual opinions, or verdicts after discussion. **That we trouble not them**—those among the Gentiles *who are turning to God*, by imposing on them burdensome rites and ceremonies. Thus James decides in behalf of Christian liberty, and of salvation through faith in Christ alone.

20. But—that we do this, *that we enjoin upon them in writing, that they abstain from abominable and scandalous things, common among the Gentiles and also offensive to Jewish believers.*

Pollutions of idols—the eating of meat offered to idols. (Ver. 29.) The idolatry of that period was terribly corrupt, associated with every form of licentiousness. Religious and idolatrous rites were schools of prostitution and vice. Portions of the victims offered in sacrifice were reserved to be eaten at feasts, or sold in the markets. Such meat was an abomination to the Jews, and the eating of it knowingly was considered a heinous offence. (Ps. 106 : 28.) Paul, however, teaches (Rom. 14 : 3, 14 ; 1 Cor. 10 : 19-33) that the eating of such meat is not sinful in itself, but should be avoided on account of the weak consciences. The injunction here must be regarded in like manner. (See Mark 7 : 14-23.) **From fornication.**

This must not be taken in any figurative or restricted sense, but in its common import. That Gentile believers should be warned against such a positive, heinous sin is explained by the fact, that the heathen not only allowed but encouraged it in their idolatrous worship, and that philosophers practiced it without shame, and public opinion treated it as a thing of indifference. Paul enforces the command (1 Cor. 6 : 18), and insists upon its moral evil and guilt. (Eph. 5 : 3 ; 1 Thess. 4 : 3.)

From things strangled and from blood—the eating of blood, and, by implication, of strangled animals, whose blood was still in them, was forbidden to Noah (Gen. 9 : 4), and after-

ward in the law of Moses. (Lev. 17 : 13, 14 ; Deut. 12 : 16-24.) “It is doubtless true that where there is refinement of feeling, and when the sensibilities have not become blunted, men instinctively, as it were, avoid the use of animals for food, which have died without losing their blood. The thought . . . gathers strength, too, from the more speedy corruption which takes place in such bodies. . . . This prohibition [the use of blood as an article of food] was probably made, not because the use of blood would be in itself, and directly, a moral wrong, necessarily defiling the conscience, but because it would tend to cherish certain propensities, and traits of character, that are, to say the least, unfavorable to morality. The use of blood for food cherishes cruelty, revenge, and all the ferocious passions, either by some influence on men’s animal nature, or by making them familiar with thoughts and practices which tend to harden the heart.” (RIPLEY on the Acts.) It should be noted that all these restrictions were really independent of and older than the Mosaic law. Not only the two last dated back to Noah, but also idolatry with its pollutions and fornication were known to be sinful before the law of Moses was given. But still these very restrictions were substantially such as were demanded by the Jews from Gentiles who became proselytes to their religion, without receiving the rite of circumcision, and who then or afterwards were styled *proselytes of the gates*. Perhaps James would have it known that Christians were as careful as Jews in regard to prevailing enormities and unworthy practices. The two first commands of this Conference had more special reference to the separation of Christians from the license of pagan life ; the last two, to their treatment of the feelings and consciences of Jewish believers.

21. For introduces the reason for the preceding restrictions. **Moses of old time**—or *from generations of old.*

- 21 strangled, and from blood. For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day.
- 22 Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch

with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief 23 men among the brethren. And they wrote letters by them after this manner;—The apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria

¶ Gen. 9 : 4. ¶ ch. 13 : 15, 27. ¶ ch. 1 : 23. ¶ 1 Thess. 1 : 1; 1 Peter 5 : 12.

Hath in every city them that preach him, announcing him as a lawgiver, and his law as of supreme authority. This was strictly true of the Roman Empire at that time. In all the important cities were colonies of the Jews, and synagogues where the law of Moses was read every sabbath day. All the attendants upon these synagogues would be constantly reminded of the prohibitions of the ceremonial law. And it was therefore necessary for Gentile Christians, for the sake of peace as well as of purity of life, to regard these restrictions, and not offend their Jewish brethren. Another, but less probable interpretation of this verse is: This liberty, with these restrictions may well be allowed Gentile converts; for there is no danger that the Jewish brethren will neglect their law which is read in the synagogues every Sabbath.

22. The will of God was now so clearly manifest that all opposition was silenced, and it remained only to adopt the proposition of James. **Then pleased it**, etc. That is, *Then the apostles and the elders with the whole church resolved*. The verb here and in ver. 25 and 28 was the one used officially in Greek for announcing the decision of the popular assembly. This was the final decision of the question. It had been submitted to the apostles and elders (ver. 2), and the former were inspired men, but they did not ignore the authority of the local church. It is evident that the church was regarded as having an established order, government and authority. **To send chosen men of their own company**—rather *having chosen men from themselves*, from their own number, to send them, etc. The chief men were probably from among their elders, or preachers. **Judas surnamed Barsabas**—supposed by some to be the brother of Joseph Barsabas (1 : 23), both

being sons of one Sabas (*bar* being the Hebrew for *son*). Nothing is certainly known concerning him except that both he and Silas were “prophets.” **Silas**—called Silvanus in the Epistles, the former name being a contraction of the latter. He was probably a Grecian or foreign Jew, and appears to have been a Roman citizen. (16 : 37.) He accompanied Paul on his second missionary journey through Asia Minor to Macedonia (ver. 40), tarried behind in Berea (17 : 4, 10, 14), but joined Paul again in Corinth. (18 : 5.) He was probably the one who conveyed the first Epistle of Peter to Asia Minor. (1 Peter 5 : 12.)

23. **And they wrote letters by them**, to be taken to Antioch. **After this manner** is omitted by the oldest manuscripts. We doubtless have the exact copy of the letters which would be written in Greek. **The apostles, and elders, and brethren**. Many of the ancient Greek manuscripts insert the article three times so as to translate, *The apostles, and the elders, and the brethren*. Some of the oldest omit *and* the before *brethren*, and are followed by Alford, and Westcott and Hort. The Revised Version translates this *The apostles and the elder brethren*. The American Revisers, however, preferred *The apostles and the elders, brethren*; that is, your brethren, as the Lord's servants and your helpers in the Lord's work. But many of the ancient manuscripts, and most of the versions and Fathers retain the words *and the*, which were regarded as genuine by Tischendorf, and also by Meyer, who supposes the omission was the result of hierarchical feeling. “It may easily be conceived that the omission was occasioned by a scruple respecting the co-operation of the congregation with the apostles.” (LECHLER, in Lange.) **Send greeting—hail, wish you joy**. This was the usual formula of salutation in Greek epistles. (23 : 26.) **To the brethren**

24 and Cilicia. Forasmuch as we have heard, that "certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave 25 no such commandment; it seemed good

unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our 26 beloved Barnabas and Paul, men that have hazarded their lives for the name of 27 our Lord Jesus Christ. We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also

u ver. 1; Gal. 2:4; 5:12; 2 Tim. 2:14; Titus 1:10, 11. * ch. 13:50; 14:19; 1 Cor. 15:30; 2 Cor. 11:23, 26.

which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, implying Gentile converts, and probably churches in all those regions. We here get a glimpse of some of the unrecorded labors of the Apostle Paul. Thus while at Antioch, both before and after his first missionary tour, Paul doubtless extended his labors and planted churches in Syria; and earlier than this, he probably, on his return to Tarsus (9:30; 11:25), made converts and gathered churches in Cilicia. See ver. 41, which implies the same facts.

24. The letter opens formally, as in Luke 1:1, and first gives a reason for their writing, **Forasmuch as we have heard that certain who went out from us**—in Jerusalem, being members of the church there. (Ver. 1, 5.) **Subverting your souls**—unsettling your minds by false teaching. **Saying, Ye must be circumcised and keep the law.** This is not found in several of the older manuscripts, and omitted by most of the highest authorities. **To whom we gave no such commandment**—they had come from the church at Jerusalem and had taught, and had probably claimed authority from the mother church. They had thus **troubled**, or disturbed the brethren at Antioch with their words, *unsettling* their souls with doubts regarding the method and conditions of salvation. (Gal. 5:2, 4.) But the assembled church at Jerusalem, with their leaders, in Conference openly disavow their authority. Paul calls "them false brethren." (Gal. 2:4.)

25. **It seemed good**—it was resolved by us. (See on ver. 22.) **Being assembled with one accord**, or rather, *having become of one mind*, implying some difference of views and discussion. There would be no significance in the statement that the church

had assembled together, but much in the fact that it had reached a unanimous conclusion. See on ch. 1:14, where the same word in the original, "with one accord," is used. **Our beloved Barnabas and Paul**—not an unmeaning compliment, but a strong endorsement of their characters against the malignings of the Judaizers. This and what follows is in harmony with the approval and band of fellowship given Paul by the apostles at Jerusalem. (Gal. 2:9.) Notice that the order of the names as in ver. 12 (on which see) is the same as that which was used before Paul became the most prominent of the two (11:30; 13:2), and as they would be naturally regarded at Jerusalem, at this time. In this the accuracy of Luke, as a historian, is manifest.

26. Ending the sentence commenced in the preceding verse. **Men who have hazarded**, literally, *have given up their lives*. Compare Phil. 3:8; and Paul's reference to Christ *giving* himself, in Gal. 2:20. In their consecration and their *will* they were martyrs, though as yet they had not laid down their lives. They had, however, given them to be spent or sacrificed for Christ. The inference is, that such men deserve the confidence and honor of their brethren.

27. **We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things**—certifying to its genuineness, and to the unanimous resolve of the church at Jerusalem, and giving all needed explanations, and answering all questions concerning the Conference and its action. Thus by these two witnesses should every word be established.

28. **For** introduces the reason for the conclusions of the conference, about which Judas and Silas would tell them. **It seemed good.** (ver. 22, 25) **to the Holy Spirit.** They had

28 tell *you* the same things by mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden
29 than *these necessary things*; *that ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and*

from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.

• 1 Cor. 10 : 23.

• ver. 20 ; ch. 21 : 25 ; Rev. 2 : 14, 20.

• Lev. 17 : 14.

been guided by the Spirit to an authoritative and unanimous conclusion. The apostles were inspired men as Jesus had promised. (John 14 : 26 ; 16 : 13.) **And to us**—including the church. **To lay upon you no greater or further burden than these necessary things**—under the circumstances and in those times, coming as they did in contact with the heathen world and with Jewish society. It was necessary that they should be separate and pure from the one and not give offence to the other.

29. (See on ver. 20) The differences are, that here the first prohibition is fuller and more definite ; and that the order of prohibition is so arranged, that those relating to food are put together, and that of fornication at the end. This, Dr. Alexander remarks, “agrees exactly with the natural relation of our oral proposition as originally uttered, to the same idea, afterward reduced to writing; thus affording an unstudied but most interesting proof of authenticity and genuineness in the record.” **From which things, if ye keep yourselves.** (John 17 : 15) Compare the similarity of James 1 : 27 “to keep himself unspotted from the world.” In this expression, and in the use of the word *greeting* in ver. 23 and James 1 : 1, as well as the practical nature of the letter, we see indication that James was the writer, or that it was dictated by him. **Ye shall do well**—what is right or commendable. (10 : 33 ; 3 John 6) Ye shall prosper in peace and harmony and promote your best interests. **Fare ye well**—the usual formula in closing a letter. Literally, *be strong*. Besides these public injunctions to the Gentile churches, was the private charge to Paul and Barnabas to remember the poor (Gal 2 : 10), those at Jerusalem. This they had done (11 : 29 30), and afterward Paul did frequently. (24 : 17 ; Rom. 15 : 26 27 ; 1 Cor 16 : 3, 2 Cor. 9 : 1) Perhaps Judas and Silas bore gifts on their re-

turn to Jerusalem. (Ver 33.) One negative result also on the side of Paul and Barnabas, was that Titus, a Gentile believer, was not compelled to be circumcised. (Gal 2 : 3.) Another negative result on the side of Jewish Christians was that they were left just as the Conference found them. Nothing was commanded and nothing forbidden in regard to their relation to circumcision and the Mosaic law. They were at their pleasure to observe it strictly as thousands of the Jewish believers did (21 : 20) or more loosely as Paul often did.

But while the question seemed now to be settled, it was not long before Judaizing teachers were enjoining circumcision on Gentile converts. Against these Paul had to contend during his whole active missionary career, as is evident from his Epistles, especially that to the Galatians. The fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple must have had a weakening power upon the Judaizing party. The church at Jerusalem had retired to Pella, but Eusebius seems to imply that some time after, they for the most part returned to Jerusalem, and the Judaizing party revived. But the terrible overthrow of Barchocheba, “the son of the star,” about A. D. 135, crushed out Judaism in Palestine. The church at Jerusalem now ceased to be the church of the circumcision. The Judaizing party of the church, however, continued down to the fifth century, in the two sects, the Nazarenes and the Ebionites. The former, a small sect beyond Jordan in Pella and other neighboring places, were almost orthodox in belief. They held themselves bound to the Mosaic Law, but did not consider Gentile Christians under the same obligation, and recognized the apostolic authority of Paul. The Ebionites, a much larger and widely disseminated sect, held that the Mosaic Law was alike binding on

30 So when they were dismissed, they came to Antioch: and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the
31 epistle: *which* when they had read, they
32 rejoiced for the consolation. And Judas and Silas, being ^b prophets also them-

selves, ^cexhorted the brethren with many
33 words, and confirmed *them*. And after
they had tarried *there* a space, they were
let ^dgo in peace from the brethren unto
34 the apostles. Notwithstanding it pleased

^b ch. 11 : 27. ^c ch. 14 : 22; 1 Cor. 14 : 3; Heb. 10 : 25. ^d Gen. 26 : 29; Exod. 4 : 18; 1 Cor. 16 : 11.

all Christians. They rejected all the Gospels but Matthew, regarded Christ as merely a man, and Paul as an apostate. "If," says Dr. J. B. Lightfoot, "the Nazarenes might have claimed some affinity to the apostles of the circumcision, the Ebionites were the direct spiritual descendants of those false brethren, the Judaizers of the apostolic age, who first disturbed the peace of the Antiochene church, and then dogged St. Paul's footsteps from city to city, everywhere thwarting his efforts and undermining his authority." (Com. Gal., p. 322.)

30-39. PAUL AND BARNABAS RETURN TO ANTIOCH. THEIR SEPARATION IN MISSIONARY WORK. This extended over a period of some months into the year A. D. 51.

30. So when they were dismissed—implying a formal and solemn leave-taking by the Jerusalem church, probably with religious exercises. When they had gathered the multitude of disciples, constituting the church at Antioch. (Ver 12; 14 : 27.) They delivered the epistle—to the proper representatives of the church, doubtless to the pastor or pastors. *They*, the subject of the verbs in this verse, refers generally to the company that returned to Antioch, but specially to Judas and Silas, the messengers sent to deliver the epistle to the church at Antioch.

31. Which, when they had read, they, the multitude, rejoiced for the consolation—which the contents of the letter gave them. Their anxiety regarding the Judaizing faction was appeased. They rejoice that the stand which Paul and Barnabas had taken was approved, and that their Christian liberty was respected and secured. Copies of the letter were probably sent to other churches.

32. Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves—not

only were they leading men and delegates of the Jerusalem church, but also inspired teachers themselves (see on 13 : 1), as well as Paul and Barnabas. **Exhorted**—some translate *comforted*, so that the verb may correspond with its noun, *consolation*, in ver. 31. Here, however, both ideas seem to be included: They *addressed the brethren* in words of exhortation and comfort and **confirmed**, *strengthened them* in the faith. It is within the province of the prophet to console, exhort, and strengthen. (1 Cor. 14 : 3.) This happy effect was produced upon the whole multitude, both the Gentiles and the less numerous Jews. One of the reasons for sending Judas and Silas may have been the fact that they had been entirely unconnected with the conversion of Gentiles, and thus above suspicion of undue partiality toward them. If so, they would have the greater weight in confirming the epistle at Antioch, especially among the Jewish brethren.

33. After they had tarried there a space—perhaps a few days. There is nothing in the expression to indicate how long. They were let go—*dismissed*, the same verb as ver 30. They were dismissed **in peace**, formally, perhaps, with religious exercises (21 : 5, 6), and with the usual salutations and good wishes. Reference seems to be had to the usual Jewish salutation, "Peace be with you," or, "Go in peace." (Luke 7 : 50, 16 : 36.) To the apostles—or, according to some ancient manuscripts, *to those who had sent them forth*, probably with an oral or written reply from the church at Antioch. The natural implication of this verse is that both Judas and Silas returned to Jerusalem.

34. This verse is wanting in the best manuscripts and was probably inserted in the text as early as the fifth and sixth centuries, to harmonize the statement in ver. 33, which implies that

35 Silas to abide there still. * Paul also and Barnabas continued in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also.

The separation of Paul and Barnabas in missionary work

36 (AND some days after Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our

* ch. 13 : 1.

† Rom. 1 : 11.

Silas returned to Jerusalem, with that in ver. 40, which implies his presence at Antioch not long after. But the communication between Jerusalem and Antioch was so frequent and easy that there is no difficulty in supposing that Silas went back to Jerusalem as his commission required, and returned to Antioch in time to go with Paul on his second missionary journey. (See on ver. 40.)

35. Antioch continued to be a large and inviting field of labor. **But Paul and Barnabas continued in Antioch teaching and preaching the word of the Lord.** It was not their word, but Christ's word (see on 8 : 25), which they both taught and published. They would naturally teach inquirers and Christian disciples, and announce the glad tidings to those who had not heard it, but neither exclusively. **With**—in common with **many others also.** Antioch abounded in preachers, and all had plenty to do. (13 : 1.) Very probably it was a centre, as Dr. Alexander remarks, "from which preachers were sent forth in various directions, and to which there was a concourse of inquiring Gentiles from the surrounding provinces, if not from distant countries."

It is at this time between the Conference at Jerusalem and the second missionary journey of Paul (ver. 40) that some able commentators place Peter's visit to Antioch and Paul's rebuke, recorded in Gal. 2 : 11, f. But it seems incredible that Peter, fresh from the Jerusalem Conference, and after the part he had there taken, and when the delegates Judas and Silas had just left Antioch, should act the part there ascribed to him. Neither is it probable that so soon after the Conference any should have come from James to undo what he had said and written. Besides, it is implied in ver. 31 and 16 : 4, 5 that the Conference was followed by a period of rest from Judaizing questions. Some suppose that

Peter's visit occurred a little before the Conference, and that he was there when certain ones came from Judea, spoken of in the first verse of this chapter. But Paul speaks of it in Gal. 2 : 11, as occurring after the Conference. At least this is the natural inference from his language. It is better with many others to place it at Paul's return to Antioch, after his second missionary journey (13 : 23), which see. Compare *Harmonic Arrangement*, notes on §§ 29, 36.

36. And some days after—an indefinite note of time which may be longer or shorter according to circumstances. It was probably now in the early spring of A. D. 51, when the weather and roads were fitting for Paul to take the journey proposed. The thought of the churches he had gathered among the Gentiles made him restless, and filled him with longings to see them and help them in the faith. (Ver. 41.) He therefore says to Barnabas, **Let us go again**, etc. The expression in the original is emphatic, *Come, let us return and look after our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do*—with special reference to their spiritual welfare, yet not excluding their temporal condition. See 14 : 21, 22; also afterwards, Paul's daily care of all the churches. (2 Cor. 11 : 2, 3, 28; 1 Thess. 3 : 5.) Paul desired not only to see men converted, but to aid in building them up in every Christian grace.

37. This verse gives the cause of Paul's separation from Barnabas. But though we see an exhibition of human frailty in two eminently pious men, the Lord overruled it for good in forming two missions and doubling the foreign missionary force. **And Barnabas determined**, or according to the majority of the oldest manuscripts, *wished, or was minded to take John whose surname was Mark.* (See on 12 : 12 and 13 : 5.) This desire of Barnabas

brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, *and see* 37 how they do. And Barnabas determined to take with them ^b John, whose surname

38 was Mark. But Paul thought not good to take him with them ⁱ who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not 39 with them to the work. And the conten-

^a ch. 13 : 4, 13, 14, 51; 14 : 1, 6, 24, 25; 2 Cor. 11 : 28. ^b ch. 12 : 12, 25; 13 : 5; Col. 4 : 10; 2 Tim. 4 : 11; Philem. 24.

ⁱ ch. 13 : 13.

has doubtless arose from his kind and generous disposition, and from his natural affection for Mark, who was his cousin. (Col. 4 : 10.) Mark of course was ready and desirous to go, and Barnabas wished to give him opportunity to make amends for past mistakes.

38. But Paul naturally disliking fickleness, decidedly condemned Mark in what probably appeared to him to be a shrinking from duty. **But Paul thought not good, etc.** *But Paul deemed it not fitting to take with them this one who departed from them from Pamphylia.*

39. Barnabas, however, did not yield, but apparently sought to defend Mark from what, perhaps, seemed to him undue severity. So when it comes to the test, he decides, rather than to throw his cousin aside, to separate from Paul, go on a mission of his own, and take Mark with him. **And the contention was so sharp between them.** This is a paraphrase rather than a translation. More literally, *And there was irritation, or a paroxysm*, the latter word being derived from the Greek, which is also used as a medical term. It is used in a good sense in Heb. 10 : 24, "for incitement unto love and good works." (DR. A. C. KENDRICK'S *Com. on Hebrews.*) The word here does not necessarily suggest an open quarrel, but such an irritation and excitement of feeling, as to produce a separation. Each considered his own reasons good; neither would yield to the other. Both showed that they were "men of like passions." (14 : 15.) No doubt unpleasant feelings were aroused, and it is possible that they both felt it the more deeply because of their long and intimate association. The excitement, however, as the word implies, ^a was only transient, and there is no intimation that it diminished their strong mutual regard. **That, so that, they departed asunder** — not in anger, but as a necessity under the cir-

cumstances. Barnabas insisted; Paul would not yield. So they agreed to part, not as fellow laborers, in the same work, but in different fields. No decision is given as to which was right. Chrysostom says, that Paul demanded what was right; Barnabas what was kind. **And so Barnabas took Mark and sailed to Cyprus**, where they in connection with Paul had labored in their former journey. (13 : 4-12.) Thus Paul and Barnabas divide their former field of labor. Omit so. Barnabas appears no more in New Testament history; but about six years later Paul speaks of him in most friendly terms. (1 Cor. 9 : 6; Gal. 2 : 13.) Mark also so conducted himself, as to merit Paul's approval. During his first imprisonment at Rome, Paul mentions Mark as a fellow-worker there (Philem. 24), and as one who had been a comfort to him (Col. 4 : 10, 11); and during his second imprisonment he wrote to Timothy, "Take Mark, and bring him with thee, for he is useful to me for ministering." (2 Tim. 4 : 11.) As we take leave of Barnabas and Mark, in the Acts, it is pleasant to think of them as sailing over the sea, bearing to its islands the glad tidings of salvation.

THE SECOND MISSIONARY TOUR OF PAUL. This journey extended through the southeastern and central portions of Asia Minor, including Cilicia and all the places where churches had been founded during the former journey, and Phrygia and Galatia; thence by way of Troas into Europe, where they preached in Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea, cities of Macedonia; thence into Greece proper, stopping briefly at Athens, and making a long stay at Corinth, where great success attends the preaching of the gospel. From this point Paul returns by way of Ephesus, Cæsarea, and Jerusalem to Antioch. (15 : 40; 18 : 22.) "In his first journey Paul may be said to have been trying his wings; for his course, ad-

tion was so sharp between them, that they
40 departed asunder one from the other. And
so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto
Cyprus. And Paul chose ^kSilas, and de-

parted, ^lbeing recommended by the
brethren unto the grace of God.

41 And he went through Syria and Cilicia,
^mconfirming the churches.

^k 1 Cor. 9 : 6 ; ver. 22. ^l ch. 14 : 26. ^m ch. 14 : 22 ; 16 : 5.

venturous as it was, only swept in a limited circle round his native province. In his second journey he performed a far more distant and perilous flight. Indeed, this journey was not only the greatest he achieved, but perhaps the most momentous recorded in the annals of the human race. In its issues it far outvalled the expedition of Alexander the Great, when he carried the arms and civilization of Greece into the heart of Asia, or that of Cæsar, when he landed on the shores of Britain, or even the voyage of Columbus when he discovered the New World. Yet when he set out on it, he had no idea of the magnitude which it was to assume, or even the direction which it was to take." (STALKER, *Life of Paul*, p. 85, f.) The time employed in this journey appears to have been about three years and a half, from the spring of A. D. 51 to the autumn of A. D. 54.

40, 41. PAUL COMMENCES HIS SECOND MISSIONARY TOUR. It is very probable that several weeks were occupied in visiting the churches of Syria and Cilicia before going north into the central regions of Asia Minor.

40. And Paul chose Silas—as his companion, *Silas* to occupy the position and relation which had been held by Barnabas. It thus appears that Silas, who had gone back to Jerusalem with Judas to report their commission to Antioch (ver. 33), had either returned thither, or else Paul now sent for him. Some probability is given to the latter supposition, by the fact that Paul seems to have started on his mission *after* Barnabas, although he was *first* to suggest it. This delay may have been occasioned through the sending for Silas. As one of the delegates from Jerusalem to Antioch and also as a prophet, he was a fitting companion of Paul in the work. He would also testify to the esteem in which both Paul and Barnabas were held by the brethren at Jerusalem. (See on ver. 22, 26, 27, 32, 33.) **Being recommended**—or

committed by the brethren of the church of Antioch, **to the grace of God**, or according to the latest critical authorities, *of the Lord*. They were committed to the favor of the Lord by prayer, and doubtless by appropriate parting religious exercises. It does not follow that like benedictions were refused Barnabas. Without doubt prayers and good wishes followed him, though possibly less formal and less general. **Departed**—*went forth*, descriptive of them as missionaries. (Luke 9 : 6 ; 3 John 7.) In place of Mark, Paul soon after chose Timothy. (16 : 1.)

41. **He went through Syria and Cilicia**. He would naturally journey from Antioch, the capital, northward through Syria, and then in a westerly course through Cilicia, doubtless visiting Tarsus and other places, where he had labored. (See on ver. 23. Compare Gal. 1 : 21.) Thus as Barnabas returns first to his native Cyprus, so Paul goes to his native Cilicia. **Confirming—or establishing, the churches**, in the faith (ver. 32), which he himself had doubtless planted. No reference is had to admitting candidates into the churches. Paul also delivered the decrees of the Conference at Jerusalem. (Ver. 23 ; 16 : 4.)

THE RELATION OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCHES TO EACH OTHER. THEIR CO-OPERATION. It appears from this chapter that the churches were distinct and independent bodies. There appears in the narrative no evidence of a confederation of churches under one common jurisdiction. The church at Jerusalem has no authority over that of Antioch, nor the church at Antioch over those of Syria and Cilicia. The churches treat each other, not as dependents, but as equals. Whatever authority is manifested is that of inspired apostles, of the Holy Spirit, and of the truth. Yet mutual helpfulness and co-operation is implied. Messengers pass to and from the churches, resulting in counteracting false teach-

ing, and in upbuilding their membership. And this accords with the New Testament elsewhere. The seven churches of Asia were distinct. A common ecclesiastical judicatory nowhere appears among the early churches, but co-operation. Jerusalem helped Antioch; and Antioch, Jerusalem. (11: 22, 29, 30.) Apollos is commended from Ephesus to Corinth. (18: 27.) The churches of Asia, Galatia, Macedonia, and Achaia co-operated in the work of benevolence and sent messengers and letters for carrying out the work. (1 Cor. 16: 1-4; 2 Cor. 8: 1-6, 16-19, 23.)

PRACTICAL REMARKS.

1. Every period of the church has its heresies, and its controversies. (Ver. 1; Gal. 1: 6; Jude 4; 1 Tim. 4: 1.)

2. We should contend earnestly for the faith. It is better to sacrifice peace than the truth. (Ver. 2; Gal. 1: 8-10; Jude 3.)

3. We might well doubt the Christianity of any one who cannot rejoice in the conversion of the heathen, whether of one nation or another. (Ver. 3; 11: 18; Phil. 1: 18.)

4. Though workers together with God, he is the leading party, and to him we should ascribe the glory. (Ver. 4; Ps. 115: 1.)

5. Faith in Christ does not at once remove all errors of education and prejudice. These, however, will give way to instruction and the enlightening influences of the Holy Spirit. (Ver. 5; 18: 25, 26; 1 Cor. 3: 1-3.)

6. We see perhaps the germ of the ecclesiastical Council in the Conference at Jerusalem. The latter with its inspired men and under the special influence of the Holy Spirit would speak with authority. The former is merely an advisory body, and has authority only so far as its decrees are confirmed by the word of God. (Ver. 6, 15.)

7. God is the Author of missions; and missionaries are his honored chosen messengers. (Ver. 7; Eph. 3: 8.)

8. We should seek from God, who knoweth our hearts, an assurance of our acceptance with him. (Ver. 8; Ps. 139: 23, 24; Rom. 8: 14-16.)

9. A heart purified by faith is the essential thing in true religion. This is true circumcision. (Ver. 9; Gal. 5: 6; 1 Peter 1: 22; Rom. 2: 29;)

10. The law is indeed a heavy yoke, bringing bondage and condemnation. By it no one can be justified. (Ver. 10; Rom. 3: 20; 7: 7-10.)

11. The gospel is the glad tidings of salvation through the grace of Christ. None are so good as not to need it, and none so bad as to be beyond its reach. (Ver. 11; 1 Tim. 1: 12-15.)

12. Truth is confirmed by the facts of experience. The gospel is shown to be the power of God. Signs and wonders attended its first proclamation. (Ver. 12; Mark 16: 20.)

13. Aside from inspiration and perhaps apostleship, James had authority as pastor of the church at Jerusalem. The pastor has authority as overseer and as an ambassador of Christ. (Ver. 13-19; 20: 28; Titus 1: 5; 2: 15; Heb. 13: 17; 1 Peter 5: 2.)

14. Peter, James, and Paul, though differing at times in their way of stating things, were one in doctrine. (Ver. 14; Eph. 2: 8; 1 Peter 1: 5; James 2: 5.)

15. God's prophetic word is in harmony with what he does through his Spirit and his servants. (Ver. 15; 2 Peter 1: 19; Rev. 19: 10.)

16. James gave an example to churches and councils in appealing to Scripture and in being guided by it. (Ver. 16; Isa. 8: 20; 2 Tim. 3: 16.)

17. Christ and the gospel are for all nations, and hence the gospel should be preached to every creature. (Ver. 17; Mark 16: 15.)

18. The progress in divine revelation, and the different dispensations, are in accordance with the eternal purposes of God. (Ver. 18; Heb. 4: 3.)

19. The law of gospel liberty rests upon the great doctrine of salvation by faith through grace. (Ver. 19; Rom. 8: 2, 15, 21; Gal. 5: 1.)

20. We must not abuse our gospel liberty in wounding or tempting our less favored brethren. (Ver. 20; Rom. 14: 15; 1 Cor. 8: 9-13; Gal. 5: 13, 14.)

21. Gospel liberty does not abrogate the duty of avoiding both the reality and the appearance of evil. (Ver. 20, 21; James 1: 25, 27.)

22. There was no ecclesiastical hierarchy in the Conference at Jerusalem. All stood as brethren. Peter had no pre-eminence above James or the other apostles. The

apostles and elders did not act independently of the whole church, but in concert with it, and obtained its sanction. (Ver. 22, 23; Matt 23: 8-11.)

23. The appointing of delegates by churches rests on apostolic precedent. (Ver. 2, 22, 23, 27.)

24. Delegates should be selected from such brethren as are noted for sound judgment piety, and good works (Ver. 2, 25, 27, 32.)

25. The spirit of brotherhood should prevail among all Christians, whether of one nation or another. (Ver. 23; Matt. 23: 8; Mark 10: 42-45.)

26. We may learn much from this chapter in regard to the settlement of church troubles. While some could be best settled by an ecclesiastical council; others might be better arranged by submitting their cases to the judgment of a sister church. (Ver. 22-28.)

27. A spirit of conciliation with prayerfulness, without selfishness, seeking to know and do the right should prevail in ecclesiastical gatherings. (Ver. 25; Rom. 14: 19.)

28. Arrogant and self-constituted teachers have done great mischief. Thus at the so-called Robber Council, (A. D 449) the majority not only brutally checked all dissent, but by the soldiery compelled assent. (Ver. 24.)

29. Certain restraints in Christian living are necessary, not only from things that are right in themselves, but also from many such as may be inexpedient. (Ver. 28, 29; 1 Cor. 10: 23, 33.)

30. Neither the apostles and elders, nor the church at Jerusalem, assumed or asserted any jurisdiction over the churches of Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia. They simply, under the guidance of the Spirit, gave their judgment regarding a specific case submitted to them. (Ver. 22-29.)

31. If a single brief epistle gave so much joy to the brethren at Antioch, how much more should the many longer ones which we have afford comfort and instruction to us. (Ver. 31; 2 Tim. 3: 16.)

32. We should always be ready to use the powers and gifts which we have received from God in his service. (Ver. 32; 1 Tim. 4: 14-16.)

33. How happily a religious controversy may end, if the parties fear God, seek his guidance, and act kindly and honestly

toward one another. (Ver. 33; 6: 1, 7; 11: 18.)

34. Preachers should not forget their calling and their work wherever they may be. (Ver. 3, 12, 35.)

35. It is not enough to make converts and plant churches; pastoral oversight and pastoral visitation are necessary. (Ver. 36; 1 Cor. 3: 6-9.)

36. One of the peculiarities of the Bible is its impartiality in recording the errors as well as the virtues of good men, and this is one proof of its inspiration. (Ver. 37-39.)

37. Human weakness was shown in the dissension between Paul and Barnabas. Probably none would have occurred if both of them had sought divine guidance beforehand. (Ver. 37-39; 1 Cor. 11: 1; James 1: 5.)

38. "This account proves that there was no *collusion or agreement* among the apostles to impose on mankind. Had there been such an agreement, and had the books of the New Testament been an imposture, the apostles would have been represented as *perfectly harmonious*, and as united in all their views and efforts. What impostor would have thought of the device of representing the early friends of the Christian religion as *divided and contending*, and separated from each other? Such a statement has an air of candor and honesty, and at the same time is apparently so much *against* the truth of the system, that no impostor would have thought of resorting to it." (BARNES.) (Ver. 39-41.)

Ch. 16: Continuing his second missionary tour, Paul revisits Derbe and Lystra, where he adds Timothy to his associates, and after visiting other churches, he extends his labors through Phrygia and Galatia. Finding no other open door in Asia Minor, and being joined by Luke at Troas, they pass over to Macedonia and begin a mission in Europe. Lydia and her household are converted, a wonderful miracle is performed, Paul and Silas are beaten and imprisoned, the jailer and his household believe, and Paul and Silas, being honorably discharged, depart from Philippi.

1-10. PAUL AND SILAS REVISIT THE CHURCHES OF LYCAONIA, EXTEND THEIR LABORS INTO PHRYGIA AND COME TO TROAS. (Gal. 4: 13-15, 19, 20; 1

In his second missionary journey Paul revisits the churches.

16 THEN came he to ^a Derbe and Lystra. And, behold, a certain disciple was there, ^o named Timotheus, (the son of a certain

woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; ² but his father *was* a Greek;) which ¹ was well reported of by the brethren that ³ were at Lystra and Iconium. Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and

^a ch. 14 : 6. ^o ch. 17 : 14 ; 20 : 4 ; Rom. 16 : 21 ; 1 Cor. 4 : 17 ; Phil. 2 : 19-22 ; Col. 1 : 1 ; 1 Thess. 3 : 2 ; 1 Tim. 1 : 2 ; 2 Tim. 1 : 2. ¹ 2 Tim. 1 : 5. ³ ch. 6 : 3.

Cor. 9 : 20 ; 1 Tim. 4 : 14 ; 2 Tim. 1 : 5, 6 ; 3 : 15.) The time embraced in this section was nearly a year, from late spring, or early summer, of A. D. 51 to the early spring of A. D. 52. (See on 15 : 40, 41.)

1. Then—rather, *and*, connecting this verse closely with the preceding chapters. Paul and Silas had left Antioch and passed through Syria and over Mount Amanus, which separates Syria from Cilicia, by the gorge anciently called the Syrian Gate, but now known as the Beilan Pass. (15 : 41.) Thence they would naturally pass through the Cilician plain on the old Roman road to Tarsus. Having visited the churches of Cilicia, the hot weather of the summer approaching, they ascend into the higher regions of Asia Minor, over Mount Taurus, into Lycania to Derbe and Lystra. It was three or four full days' journey from Tarsus, through the mountain valley of the Cydnus, and through the great fissure of Mount Taurus, a gorge known as the Cilician Gates, extending from north to south, a distance of eighty miles. Instead of **then came he to Derbe and Lystra**, the Revised Version, following Westcott and Hort, and some of the oldest manuscripts, read, *and he came also to Derbe and to Lystra*. This implies more distinctly that there were congregations of believers in both of these cities, and that Timothy was at Lystra. Notice that in going from east to west Paul reaches Derbe first. (See on 14 : 6.) The exclamation **behold** introduces the meeting of Timothy as a matter of special interest and perhaps of surprise, who was to play an important part in the future history of the apostle. **A certain disciple was there**—at Lystra (see above) **named Timothy**. He was probably converted during Paul's previous visit (1 Cor. 4 : 17 ; 1 Tim. 1 : 2 ; 2 Tim. 1 : 2), as well as his mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois. (2 Tim. 1 : 5.) From

childhood he had been instructed in the Old Testament at home. (2 Tim. 3 : 15.) Alford infers from 2 Tim 3 : 10, 11, that he may have been converted at Antioch in Pisidia, though Lystra was probably his birthplace. **The son of a certain woman which was a Jewess**, etc. Rather, according to the most approved reading, *the son of a believing Jewish woman, but of a Greek father*. His father was certainly uncircumcised, but whether he was a proselyte of the gate is uncertain. Marriages with the heathen were forbidden by the Mosaic law (Deut. 7 : 3, 4 ; Ezra 9 : 1-5), but were not uncommon in later periods of Jewish history, especially in districts where there were but few Jews. (See Ruth 1 : 4.) Timothy thus formed a link between Jews and Greeks, which, in addition to his natural and spiritual abilities, especially fitted him as a helper to Paul. He attended Paul and Silas through the greater part of this second missionary journey. He labored at Corinth (1 Cor. 16 : 10), and at Ephesus (1 Tim. 1 : 3), and was an unselfish attendant on Paul at his first imprisonment at Rome. (Phil. 2 : 18, 19.) The two epistles of Paul addressed to him are full of personal details and affectionate counsel, and indicate that, though not robust in health, he was a faithful and earnest minister of the gospel. (1 Tim. 5 : 23 ; 6 : 11, 12 ; 2 Tim. 1 : 4 ; 4 : 9.)

2. Timothy was well reported of, or well-attested by the brethren at Lystra and Iconium, among whom he had doubtless worked earnestly for Christ during the four or five years since his conversion. This general attestation to his faithful work and good character was in accordance with Paul's own rule in selecting men for the ministry. (Titus 1 : 7 ; 1 Tim. 5 : 22.) On *Iconium*, see on 14 : 21.

3. Paul's discriminating eye soon discovered that Timothy, a youth prob-

*took and circumcised him, because of the Jews which were in those quarters:

for they knew all that his father was a Greek.

* 1 Cor. 9 : 20 ; Gal. 2 : 3 ; see Gal. 5 : 2.

ably of about twenty years, would be a suitable man to go forth with him as a missionary helper and take the place of Mark. At this time he may also have received prophetic assurances concerning him. (1 Tim. 1 : 18.) And since *he wished him for this work he took and circumcised him.* Paul did this, not as a matter of duty and obligation, but **because of the Jews**—that is, the unbelieving Jews, *in those places, for they knew all that his father was a Greek.* It was a matter of prudence and expediency, conceding this to Jewish feelings and prejudice (1 Cor. 9 : 20), thus avoiding offense to the Jews by associating with him in his work an uncircumcised person.

This act of Paul has been regarded by some as inconsistent with his refusal to circumcise Titus (Gal. 2 : 3), and his condemnation of those who demanded circumcision of the Galatian Christians. (Gal. 5 : 2, 4.) Upon this general subject several things may be said : (1) The rite of circumcision did not originate with the law of Moses, but it was enjoined upon Abraham to be performed upon his descendants. It was thus older than the law and broader than Israel. "Not that it is of Moses, but of the fathers." (John 7 : 22.) The abrogation of the Mosaic ritual therefore did not annul the obligation that rested upon the descendants of Abraham ; but such obligation did not rest upon Gentiles, such as Titus or the Gentiles of the Galatian church. (2) This rite appears to have been a perpetual institution for Abraham and his seed "in all their generations" (Gen. 17 : 9) ; it was God's covenant in their flesh "for an everlasting covenant," that is, so long as the flesh of Abraham should continue. (Gen. 17 : 13, 14.) It would therefore appear to be still obligatory upon the descendants of Abraham, unless it has been annulled by divine authority. (3) But it does not appear that Christ or the gospel annulled it. The decision of the Apostolic Conference had reference, not to Jews,

but to Gentiles. While it did not enjoin circumcision upon Gentiles, it took for granted that Jews would observe the rite. And years after, at Paul's last visit to Jerusalem, James evidently regarded it as untruthful for any to affirm that Paul taught that Jews should not circumcise their children. (21 : 20-25.) Paul's rule was : "Is any man called, being circumcised, let him not be uncircumcised ; is any called in uncircumcision, let him not be circumcised." (1 Cor. 7 : 18.) He never once intimates that the Jews were to give up the rite ; but he most earnestly opposes Gentiles adopting it. He saw nothing either in circumcision or in uncircumcision inconsistent with the faith or practices of the gospel. In all his controversies on the subject Paul never intimates any difference of opinion regarding the circumcision of Jews. If Paul could have said or shown that the gospel had done away with circumcision, that would have been the end of the argument. His epistle to the Galatians was especially for Gentile Christians (Gal. 4 : 8), and in opposing Judaizers he has nothing to say against the simple rite among Jewish believers, while he opposes it among all as a condition of justification. (4) Timothy was a half-blood Jew. His father was a Gentile, and as such he represented his family. The statement that he was a *Greek* is emphatic. The Jews would infer that Timothy was therefore not circumcised, or at least would inquire into the facts of the case. The law did not determine whether the son of such a marriage should be circumcised or not. According to the Rabbins the mother had no right to do it without the father's consent. Paul would not regard it as obligatory in such a case, but merely a matter of expediency. Timothy, if circumcised, would be more useful among the Jews. That it was not contrary to gospel liberty is evident from the fact stated in the next verse, that immediately after this they proceed to deliver the

- 4 And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, ^athat were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem.
- 5 And ^aso were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily.

Paul and Silas visit Phrygia and Galatia, and begin their European labours at Philippi.

- 6 NOW when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were ^aforbidden of the Holy Spirit to

^a ch. 15 : 23-29.

^a ch. 15 : 41.

^a ch. 10 : 19 ; 13 : 2 ; Rom. 1 : 13 ; 15 : 22.

decrees of the Apostolic Conference to the churches. (5) That of Titus was a test case. As a Gentile he was under *no obligation* to be circumcised. It was also *not expedient*. It would have been an infringement upon his own gospel liberty and that of his Gentile brethren, binding on him and them unnecessary burdens. And to have circumcised him at that time would have been to acknowledge circumcision as a condition of salvation.

It was probably after Timothy was circumcised that he was set apart to the ministry "with the laying on of hands of the eldership" (1 Tim. 4 : 14) ; and was endued with special gifts (2 Tim. 1 : 6) ; and then especially, as well as at his baptism, he made a good profession before many witnesses. (1 Tim. 6 : 12.) In Timothy we have an illustration of *a call to the ministry*. First, he was a converted young man of the church at Lystra. Second, he had the call of the Spirit. The *gift* was in him. (1 Tim. 1 : 18 ; 4 : 14.) Third, His call was perceived and approved by the brethren of the church. He was *well reported* by the brethren (ver. 2) ; thence, fourth, his endowments by nature and grace fitted him for the work. He had enjoyed the blessings of a pious ancestry ; he had been a student of the scriptures from childhood ; he had an aptness for Christ's service. He further enjoyed Paul's companionship and instruction. Fifth, as a final act of approval, he is now, or perhaps later, ordained to the gospel ministry. (1 Tim. 4 : 14 ; 2 Tim. 1 : 6.) On the one hand Christ calls by the Spirit ; and this call becomes manifest to his people. On the other hand, pastors and churches should be looking out for young men who are called to this work.

4. And as they went or journeyed through the cities—those in which Paul had preached the gospel before, including Iconium and probably

Antioch in Pisidia. **Delivered them the decrees**, or decisions, which had been passed by the Conference at Jerusalem. (15 : 28, 29.) Copies of the circular letter (15 : 23-29.) sent out were probably left with the churches.

5. As a consequence of this visitation **the churches were established, strengthened internally in the faith**, in their belief of the gospel and trust in Christ ; and externally **increased in number daily**—that is, of believers added to them. (2 : 47.) The deliverance of the decrees tended to harmonize the Jewish and Gentile converts, and prepared them to be profited by the preaching of Paul and of Silas. This happy condition of the churches resulted in conversions and baptisms. Revivals attended the missionaries wherever they went.

6. Paul had now visited the churches which he and Barnabas had planted in their former tour. From this point he makes an advance into Phrygia and Galatia. Assuming that he started from Antioch in Pisidia, he would naturally take the Roman roads and travel in a northerly direction through Phrygia, to Pessinus, a city in western Galatia, and thence eastwardly to Aneyra (the modern Angora), and to Tivium. These were the three great cities of Galatia, where perhaps churches were planted. Instead of **throughout**, the most approved reading is *through* : *And having gone through the region of Phrygia and Galatia*.

Phrygia represents a somewhat undefined region of country, commonly bounded on the north by Bithynia and Galatia, on the east by Cappadocia and Lycaonia, on the south by Lycia and Pisidia, and on the west by Lydia and Mysia. At the time of Paul's visit it was not a distinct Roman province. It rather represented that region where the Phrygian race mostly predomi-

7 preach the word in Asia, after they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into

Bithynia; but the Spirit suffered them

nated. With Galatia it occupied the great central portion of Asia Minor. (See on 2 : 10; 18 : 23.) **Galatia** occupied a country that originally belonged to the Phrygians, and afterward was colonized by the Gauls. It took its name from those Celtic or Gallic tribes that emigrated eastward into Asia Minor, B. C. 278, and after roaming around for a time, at length settled down in the above-mentioned region, and intermarried with the Greeks. From B. C. 189, though subject to Rome, it was governed by native chiefs; but about B. C. 25 the country was formally reduced to a Roman province. Its boundaries can not be given with exactness. In general, it was bounded on the west by the province of Asia, which included portions of Phrygia, north by Bithynia and Paphlagonia, east by Pontus and Cappadocia, south by Lycaonia and Phrygia. With the old Phrygian nature worship the Greek settlers mingled their culture and brought in their language. The Jews also migrated in such numbers, especially at Ancyra, the capital of the Roman province, that certain privileges were accorded them by Augustus. Some proselytes had doubtless been won by them from heathenism. Thus Paul found them Celtic in character, using the Greek language, practicing Phrygian rites, with some knowledge of Jewish ceremonies.

Luke passes over this part of Paul's labors with great brevity. The omission, however, is compensated by Paul's allusions in his Epistles to the churches of Galatia. From this we learn that he was in Galatia a longer time than he had planned, on account of an attack of disease, which he styles an "infirmity of the flesh." (Gal. 4 : 13.) This may have been the first serious appearance of the "thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet" him (2 Cor. 12 : 7), which was perhaps a painful inflammation of the eyes, brought on by fatigue and exposure in his travels and labors. God overruled it for good. The Galatians received him as "an angel of God" (Gal. 4 : 14.), and counted it their "happiness" to minister to his necessities; and if possible, "would have

plucked out their own eyes and given them" to him. (Gal. 4 : 15.) Many were converted from idolatry (Gal. 4 : 8), and some from the beggarly elements of Judaism (Gal. 5 : 1.), and were endowed with spiritual gifts. (Gal. 3 : 2-5.) Churches were organized (Gal. 1 : 2.), a spirit of benevolence was awakened which assumed a systematic form. (Gal. 6 : 6-10; 1 Cor. 16 : 1, 2.) For a time they ran well (Gal. 5 : 7), but they exhibited the impulsiveness and the fickleness of the Gallic race in turning back to superstitious forms, and following Judaizing teachers. (Gal. 1 : 6.) Thus in Paul's successes among the Galatians, the Lord's grace was sufficient for him, and "his strength was made perfect in weakness." (2 Cor. 12 : 9, 10.) Paul again visited Phrygia and Galatia on his third journey. (18 : 23.)

Retracing his steps westward through Galatia and Phrygia, Paul was perplexed in regard to his next field of labor. He and his companions refrain from taking the road southwest to Sardis and Smyrna, because they were **forbidden of the Holy Spirit**, through some communication or internal intimation similar to that in 13 : 2, **to preach the word in Asia**. By Asia is meant the province of Asia, bordering on the Ægean Sea, of which Ephesus was the capital. In this sense it is always used in the New Testament.

7. Paul's judgment was much at fault, at this period, in regard to times and places and labor. He had unexpectedly been delayed in Galatia, restrained from preaching in Asia; and now in his westward journey, coming to the borders of Mysia, he *attempted* to go northward into Bithynia, **but the Spirit did not permit them**. According to the oldest manuscripts and best authorities, this should read, *The Spirit of Jesus*, etc., the Holy Spirit which he sends. (See Rom. 8 : 9.) The time had not yet come for Paul to preach the gospel in Asia. It was the Lord's will that he should now carry the gospel into Europe, as is made evident in ver. 9 and 10. *Mysia* is only found here in the New Testament, and *Bithynia* here and in 1 Peter 1 : 1. The

8 not. And they passing by Mysia came
* down to Troas.

9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the
night; there stood a * man of Macedonia,

* 2 Cor. 2 : 12; 2 Tim. 4 : 13. ¶ ch. 9 : 10-12; 2 Cor. 12 : 1-4. * ch. 10 : 30; see Rom. 15: 26;
2 Cor. 8 : 1; 11 : 9.

former occupied a region in the north-western corner of Asia Minor, and is sometimes included in the province of Asia. Its name is descriptive of a race, who occupied a region along the frontier of the provinces of Asia and Bithynia. Bithynia was a province on the Euxine or Black Sea, embracing the northernmost portion of Asia Minor. It is sometimes called Pontus and Bithynia, the Roman province of Pontus not being constituted until the reign of Nero.

8. And passing by Mysia—not staying to preach the gospel there, for they must pass through it to reach **Troas**, on the shore of the Ægean Sea. Troas was a seaport town about four miles from the site of ancient Troy. It was built and named after Alexander the Great—Alexander Troas—now called Eski Stamboul. With its environs it was raised by Augustus to a colony, and like Philippi (ver. 12) was a free city, and was not reckoned as belonging to either Asia or Bithynia, and is here accurately represented as distinct from Mysia. Paul “was now within the charmed circle where for ages civilization had had its home; and he could not be entirely ignorant of those stories of war and enterprise . . . which have made it forever bright and dear to the heart of mankind. At only four miles distance lay the Plain of Troy, where Europe and Asia encounter each other in the struggle celebrated in Homer’s immortal song. Not far off Xerxes, sitting on a marble throne, reviewed the three millions of Asiatics with which he meant to bring Europe at his feet. On the other side of that narrow strait lay Greece and Rome, the centres from which issued the learning, the commerce, and the armies which governed the world. Could his heart, so ambitious for the glory of Christ, fail to be fired with the desire to cast himself upon those strongholds, or could he doubt that the Spirit was leading him forward to this enterprise?” (STALKER, *Life of Paul*, p. 90.)

9. Paul now learned the design of

the Spirit in turning him aside from the places where he had thought of laboring. As he reaches Troas, the limit of Asia Minor, and looks over the Ægean Sea toward Macedonia, doubtless he earnestly seeks divine direction. And he is not left long in doubt; for the will of the Lord becomes manifest in a vision which appeared to Paul **in the night**. By *vision* is meant, not a dream, but a sight divinely given and actually seen. (See on 9 : 10.) Paul may have been in prayer and in a spiritually elevated and ecstatic state. **A man of Macedonia.** The same Lord who gave him the vision would doubtless reveal to him the nationality of the man. Besides, his appearance, speech, and dress would indicate that he was a Macedonian. **Prayed—beseeching him, saying, Come over into Macedonia and help us**—“with the gospel against Satan and against blindness.” (BENGEL.) This has been the watchword of missions in all ages, the unuttered cry of heathenism for that help which the gospel alone can give. “On this momentous vision hung the Christianization of Europe, and all the blessings of modern civilization.” (SCHAFF, *Apos. Ch.*, 1, p. 308.)

Macedonia was an important kingdom of Greece under Philip and Alexander the Great, and afterward a Roman province. It was bounded on the north by Illyricum and Moesia, on the east by Thrace and the Ægean Sea, on the west by Epirus and the Adriatic Sea and on the south by Achaia, or Greece proper. It consisted of undulating plains, valleys and mountains, the most noted of the latter being Athos and Olympus. The ancient Macedonians were a hardy and warlike race, and in the time of Paul the population still possessed much vigor and courage, and was less corrupt than the more polished society of Achaia. It was a good country for beginning Christian missions in Europe. The churches Paul gathered there were among the best, and gave him more

and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, as-

surely gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.

11 Therefore loosing from Troas, we came

* 2 Cor. 2 : 13.

comfort than any he established elsewhere. The account of his work in Macedonia is given in this chapter and the next. (See also 19 : 21 ; 20 : 1-6.) Compare Paul's epistles to the Thessalonians and Philippians.

But the influence did not stop with the work done here. The Greek influence had gone forth from Macedonia throughout the world since the days of Alexander the Great. And so the early Gentile churches were largely Greek churches, making Paul's assertion apposite, that the gospel the power of God, "to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." "For some considerable (it cannot but be indefinable) part of the three first centuries of the church of Rome, and most, if not all, the churches of the West, were, if we may so speak, Greek religious colonies. Their language was Greek, their organization Greek, their writers Greek, their Scriptures Greek." (MILMAN, *Latin Christianity*, ch. 1, p. 32.)

10. *And after he had seen the vision, we endeavored to go—* seeking a ship to cross the sea. At this point the writer of the Acts uses the first person, from which it is inferred that Luke joins Paul at Troas. It has been surmised that on account of Paul's recent severe illness (Gal. 4 : 13), "Luke, the beloved physician," now accompanied him to watch over his health. The brevity of the account in the first eight verses, compared with the rest of this chapter, indicates that the latter was written by an eye witness. **Assuredly gathering, or concluding that the Lord, or, according to many manuscripts, that God had called us to preach the gospel unto them.** Here and in the preceding verses we see how Paul selected his mission fields and arranged his journey. He exercised his judgment, but sometimes was overruled by providences like that in Galatia, where he was delayed by sickness, at other times guided or restrained by the Spirit, and occasionally

directed by visions. (See 13 : 2 ; 14 : 6 ; 15 : 33 ; 18 : 9, 10 ; 19 : 21 ; 20 : 22 ; 23 : 11.)

11-40. PAUL, SILAS, TIMOTHY, AND LUKE ARRIVE IN EUROPE. THEIR LABORS AT PHILIPPI. (2 Cor. 11 : 25 ; Phil. 1 : 29, 30 ; 4 : 2, 3 ; 1 Thess. 2 : 2.) It was probably in the early spring, perhaps March, A. D. 52, that Paul reached Philippi, where he doubtless remained several weeks. If the gospel, instead of going westward, had gone eastward into India, China, and Japan, missionaries might now be coming from those countries to Europe.

11. An opportunity occurs at once for making the desired voyage to Macedonia, about one hundred miles distant from Troas. **Therefore, loosing, setting sail, from Troas we came with a straight course.** The wind must have been from the south to overcome the current which runs from the Dardanelles, and, as often in those parts, it blew with considerable force, for the voyage was made in two days. When six years later Paul journeyed in the opposite direction the voyage took five days. (20 : 6.) Such specifications of times accord with what is now known about the navigation of those waters and shows the accuracy of the narrative. **Samothracia**, a mountainous island in the Ægean Sea, now the Archipelago, rising five thousand two hundred and forty feet above the sea, midway between Troas and Neapolis. It has no good harbor, but with a south wind there would be a safe anchorage along the north shore. Here it would appear they lay at anchor the first night. **Neapolis**, meaning New City, is northwest from Samothracia and, with a southerly wind, could be reached in seven or eight hours. It was a Thracian city, the modern Kavilla, and the seaport town of Philippi, about nine miles distant. It was annexed by Vespasian to the Roman province of Macedonia. It was on a high rocky promontory, with a respectable harbor. The mountain back of the

with a straight course to Samothracia, 12 and the next day to Neapolis; and from thence to ^b Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a

colony. And we were in that city abiding certain days.

13 And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was

^b Phil. 1 : 1.

town rises to one thousand six hundred and seventy feet above the sea, and there is a defile in the mountain through which the road passes to the plain of Philippi. Traces of military roads, and ruins of a great aqueduct, with Latin inscriptions, are still found. It now has several thousand inhabitants, and is the seat of a very active commerce.

12. And from thence, from Neapolis, to **Philippi**, going in a northwesterly direction over the paved Roman road. (See on ver. 11.) Philippi was situated on the sides of an overhanging hill and on the banks of a stream called Gangas, now known as Anghista. The city was built by Philip of Macedon, and named after himself. Extensive ruins now mark the locality, among which are two gateways, belonging to the time of Claudius. Many interesting inscriptions in Latin and some in Greek are found. **Which is the, rather, a chief city of that part of Macedonia, a colony, or which is a city of Macedonia, first of the district, a colony.** Some suppose this to mean that Philippi was the first city in Macedonia which Paul reached, Neapolis being its seaport, but belonging to Thrace. Mr. Hort suggests that possibly the present text is a primitive corruption, and that it might originally have read, "a chief city of Pierian Macedonia." (Wescott and Hort, *N. T.*, Vol. 11, p. 97.) It is better, however, to understand the city as *first* in rank in that district of Macedonia, being a Roman colony-town. It was not the capital, for Thessalonica was the capital of the whole province, and Amphipolis of the eastern division, in which Philippi was situated. Notice also that it is said, not *the*, but *a chief, or first city*, that is a city of *first rank*. And this accords with the fact that it was a *colony*, which means that it was a city occupied by Roman citizens who retained their full privileges and were governed by their

own senate and magistrates. (Ver. 20.) It was thus a miniature of Rome. The Latin language was spoken and inscribed upon their coins, and the Roman law administered. The plain of Philippi had been the scene of the great battle in which Brutus and Cassius were defeated by Octavian and Antony. In commemoration of this event Augustus established there a colony, a military settlement composed principally of those who had been soldiers of Antony. With these facts accord the present ruins and the Latin inscriptions, and with them agree Luke's reference to *magistrates* (ver. 20, 22, 35, 36, 38), and *sergeants*. (Ver. 35, 38.) It was a Roman city in a Greek district. **And we were in that city abiding certain days**—before the arrival of the Sabbath spoken of in the next verse.

13. This verse introduces the first preaching of the gospel by Paul, possibly by any one, in Europe. The church at Rome may, however, have been established before this by some of the converts on the day of Pentecost. (2 : 10.) For several days Paul and his companions must have looked for an opportunity to proclaim their message. **The Sabbath-day** had generally afforded them opportunity in other cities in reaching Jews, proselytes, and devout Gentiles in the synagogue, but there was no synagogue in Philippi. It was a military rather than a commercial city, and few Jews resided there. There was, however, a place of prayer outside the city, and to this the missionaries resort. **We went out of the city, etc.**—rather, according to the highest critical authorities, *out of the gate by a river*. The Gangas is doubtless meant. **Where prayer was wont to be made**, or better, *where was wont to be a place of prayer*, a place where Jews assembled in the open air for prayer. Such places were generally outside of those cities where there was no synagogue. Sometimes a small house was

went to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted **thither**. And a certain woman named

Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that

• Rev. 2: 18.

4 Ps. 110: 3; 119: 18; Luke 24: 45; 2 Cor. 3: 12-18; 4: 6; Eph. 1: 17, 18.

erected; at other times a grove or a space under a shady tree was thus employed. Such places were chosen by the seaside, or on the banks of rivers, where washing of the hands before prayer, and other Jewish ablutions could be performed. Dr. Hackett in December, 1858, visited the sites of Neapolis and Philippi, and found the demands of the narrative geographically met. He saw the winter-torrent of the Gangas, a rapid stream varying in depth from one and a half to five feet. Its course ran round the south-east to the southwest of Philippi. And three hundred and fifty feet from the place he crossed the stream he found a break in the dilapidated walls, where the gate had been on that side of the city. Through this gate Paul and his company probably first entered the city, and through it they passed out to the place of prayer. (See *Bibliotheca Sacra*, xvii., p. 866 f.) The Revised Version, following Westcott and Hort and many ancient manuscripts, translate, *Where we supposed was a place of prayer*. That is, they had either heard the Jews were accustomed to assemble in that vicinity, or rather, they saw some women assembling by the stream, and supposed it a meeting place for prayer. **We sat down**—in the customary posture of teachers. (13: 14; Luke 4: 20.) **And spake unto the women which resorted thither, who came together**. It would seem that only women were there. "Probably the number of Jewish men in the city was extremely small, and the whole unimportant Jewish population consisted chiefly of women, some of them doubtless married to Gentiles (ver. 1); hence there is no mention of men present." (MEYER.)

14. Doubtless up to this time Philippi had appeared as an uninviting field for missionary labor. But now it becomes evident to Paul why he had been forbidden by the Spirit to labor further in Asia Minor, and why he had been called to Europe. God was mindful of

the prayers of those women who had been accustomed to meet by the riverside for prayer, and had provided, as in the case of Cornelius, a preacher to make known to them the way of salvation. **A certain woman named Lydia**. This name was common among the Greeks and Romans, and would naturally indicate her as a Gentile. That she was in the place of prayer, and the statement that she was one who **worshipped God**, marks her as a devout Gentile, perhaps what was later styled a proselyte of the gate. (10: 2; 13: 43, 50; 18: 7.) She appears as a temporary resident of Philippi, as her home was nearly three hundred miles distant at **Thyatira**, a considerable city of Lydia, in Asia Minor, which formed a part of the province of Asia. It was celebrated for its purple dye, and inscriptions of the craft of dyers have been found there. The purple color, obtained from a shell fish, was highly valued by the ancients, and included many shades from rose-red to sea-green or blue. (Luke 16: 19; Rev. 17: 4; 18: 16.) This accords with the statement that Lydia was a **seller of purple**—or *fabrics dyed in purple*. It is possible that she had a dyeing shop just outside the city gate, and may have dealt both in the dye itself and in purple garments. Strabo calls Thyatira a Macedonian colony, implying that Macedonian colonists had migrated thither, and thus Lydia's relationship may have been one of the reasons of her coming to Macedonia for the purposes of trade. As her name and country are the same, it has been suggested by some that possibly she was styled in Philippi "the Lydian woman"; the name Lydia was, however, a common female name in ancient times. **Heard us**—rather, *was listening*. **Whose heart the Lord opened**—awakened and disposed her understanding and affections, to receive the truth. The heart is regarded as the seat of the will, understanding, and affections. (See Matt. 11: 23-27; 1 Cor. 3: 6, 7; Ezek. 36: 26, 27.) **That**

she attended unto the things which were 15 spoken of Paul. And when she was bap-

tized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faith-

she attended, to apply the mind, give heed to Paul's instructions. (See 1 Tim. 4 : 13 ; 2 Peter 1 : 19.) Notice the order. She *listened*; the Lord *opened* her heart; she *attended* to the word. Thus she believed and obeyed, as is evident from the next verse. **The things that were spoken**—in *conversational* instruction, for such is the meaning of the original. Jesus the Christ, repentance, faith, and baptism would be the natural topics of discourse. Alford well remarks, that "although forbidden to preach the word in *Asia*, their first convert is an *Asiatic*." Thyatira, her home, had afterward an important Christian church. (Rev. 1 : 11 ; 2 : 18, 24.) A noticeable feature of the work in Macedonia here came into view,—the part taken in it by women. (17 : 4, 12.) Amid the general decay of religions at this period, many [women everywhere sought the purer teachings of the synagogue. These female proselytes were more numerous in Macedonia than elsewhere, perhaps because of its less corrupt society and its sounder morality.

15. And when she was baptized—implying that she had received instruction regarding this duty; but whether she was baptized at this meeting or later, the phrase does not determine. Doubtless the ordinance was administered in the river Gangas. (Ver. 13.) If it was now spring, as we have supposed, the river would be full and water abundant. **And her house**—*her household*, consisting doubtless of persons in her employ, very likely of women who assisted her in her business. Her family as well as herself received the truth. "See," says Chrysostom, an ancient distinguished Greek interpreter and preacher, "how she persuaded them all," taking for granted from the circumstances of the case that Lydia's household were all of an age to receive instruction. But this and other household baptisms in the New Testament are often used as an evidence of infant baptism in the apostolic age. (Ver. 33 ; 10 : 2, 48 ; 1 Cor. 1 : 16.) But the argument is founded on the presumption that there were infants in these house-

holds. Of this there is no proof, but rather to the contrary. For there were no infants in the company of Cornelius, for they all spake with tongues and believed. (10 : 46.) There were none in the family of the jailer, for he rejoiced and believed with all his house. (16 : 34.) Nor were there any in the household of Stephanas, for they "addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints." (1 Cor. 16 : 15.) Since then there were no infants in those baptized households of which we know the facts, it is a fair presumption, no evidence to the contrary, that there were none in the household of Lydia. But more than this: there is no evidence that Lydia was a married woman, or that she had children, much less that she had infant children. She was nearly three hundred miles from home, in a foreign city, and for purposes of trade. As nothing is said of her husband, she was more probably a maiden or a widow; unless possibly she had left her husband and younger children at home in Thyatira. This argument is strengthened by the fact that she invites Paul and his company to *her* house (**my house**), and their reluctance to accept her invitation, so much so that she finds it necessary to *constrain them*, suggests the idea that they felt a delicacy in becoming guests of a *woman*. Household baptisms do not necessarily imply infant baptisms. Thousands of families in our own country have been baptized, in which there were no infant children. These conclusions are in harmony with the best biblical scholarship of the age. "There is," says Olshausen, "altogether wanting any conclusive proof-passage for the baptism of children in the age of the apostles." "Therefore," says Meyer, "the baptism of the children of Christians, of which no trace is found in the New Testament, is not to be held as an apostolic ordinance, as, indeed, it encountered early and long resistance; but it is an *institution of the church*, which gradually arose in post-apostolic times in connection with the development of ecclesiastical life and of doctrinal teaching, not certainly attested

ful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide *there*. And *she* constrained us.
16 And it came to pass, as we went *to*

prayer, a certain damsel *possessed with a spirit of divination* met us, which brought her masters much gain by sooth-

^e Luke 24 : 29 ; Heb. 13 : 2.

^f ver. 13. ^g 1 Sam. 28 : 7.

before Tertullian, and by him still decidedly opposed, and, although already defended by Cyprian, only becoming general after the time of Augustine in virtue of that connection." "To me," says Abbott, "it appears very clear that there is no authority for the practice of infant baptism in such incidental historical references such as this." To like effect Neander and others.

She besought us—earnestly invited us to make her house our home, while tarrying at Philippi. Yet she puts it modestly, **If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord**, in the profession I have made in baptism, and regard me as a true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. **Come into my house, and abide**, or tarry there as guests. She regards it as a privilege to entertain them. **She constrained us**, by her urgent importunity. (Luke 24 : 29.) This is the first instance of Christian hospitality recorded in the Acts; and indicates the spirit of liberality which characterized the Macedonian churches. (2 Cor. 8 : 1-6.) They not only sent gifts to meet Paul's necessities in other cities (2 Cor. 11 : 9; Phil. 4 : 15, 16), but gave from among themselves persons to share his toils. (20 : 4.) And long after when a prisoner at Rome they sent Epaphroditus, one of their teachers, with similar gifts, and to act as his attendant. (Phil. 2 : 25, 26, 30; 4 : 18.)

16. The closing sentence of the preceding verse implies that Paul and his companions accepted Lydia's hospitality. A church was doubtless organized at her house, which received accessions to its membership from week to week. Luke now proceeds to relate an incident which resulted in persecution and the departure of the missionaries from Philippi. **And it came to pass, on a time, as we went**, rather, *as we were going to the place of prayer*. The narrative implies that it was not on the same day of Lydia's baptism, but some time after. **A certain damsel—a young female servant or slave. Pos-**

sessed with a spirit of divination—literally, *a spirit, a Python*. That she was possessed with an evil spirit, a demon, is evident from the facts, that Paul *addressed it*, that *the spirit left the girl*, and that her masters found *the hope of their gain gone*. (Ver. 18, 19.) Luke characterizes the possession a Python, the term popularly applied to it. Python was in Greek mythology the name of the serpent or dragon that guarded the Delphic oracle, and was slain by Apollo. The oracle was possessed by the latter, and the name Python sometimes applied to him. He was the god of prophecy and the patron of the healing art. This maid-servant was supposed to be inspired by him, similar to a priestess of Apollo. Some interpreters have noticed that the name Python was sometimes applied to a ventriloquist; and in this case the demon may, among other things, have practiced the arts of ventriloquism. Apollo is also regarded as the averter of evil, and the title of *Saviour* was sometimes given him by Greek writers. This may have added significance to the maiden's testimony, "These men show unto us the way of salvation."

Who brought her masters much gain by soothsaying. This shows what she did. As a diviner she professed to tell future events, interpret signs and tell fortunes. The word *soothsaying*, says Trench "has reference to the tumult of the mind, the fury, the temporary madness under which those were, who were supposed to be possessed by the god, during the time that they delivered the oracles; this mantic fury displaying itself in the eyes rolling, the lips foaming, the hair flying, with all other tokens of a more than natural agitation." (N. T. Synonyms, p. 42, f.) In this poor girl, held in slavery by men who make gain out of her misfortunes, we get a view of one side of woman's degradation in Europe before the gospel reached it.

17. **The same followed Paul and us and cried**—not only this time, but

17 saying: the same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, ^bThese men are the servants of the most high God, which
18 show unto us the way of salvation. And this did she many days. But Paul, ⁱbeing grieved, turned and said to the spirit, ^lI command thee ^kin the name of

Jesus Christ to come out of her. ¹And he came out the same hour.

19 And ^mwhen her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, ⁿthey caught Paul and Silas, and ^odrew them into the market-place unto the rulers, and brought them to the magistrates, say-

^h Luke 4 : 34, 41.

ⁱ Mark 1 : 25, 34.

^k ch. 3 : 6.

¹ Mark 16 : 17.

^m ch. 19 : 24, 27.

ⁿ 2 Cor. 6 : 5.

^o Matt. 10 : 18.

often. (Ver. 18.) If she had thus cried out "in sarcasm and derision somewhat as a crowd of boys might do" it would have been somehow indicated. The general form of the narrative seems against such a supposition. Some think that she repeated expressions which she had heard Paul use without knowing their meaning. It is better, however, to regard these utterances as those of the demon through her, similar to those of the demoniacs who acknowledged the supremacy and power of Christ. (Matt. 8 : 29; Luke 4 : 34.) **Who show unto us**—or, according to the oldest manuscripts, *unto you*—**the way of salvation**—of the soul,—the divine salvation. The understanding of this language would vary according to the hearer's knowledge of the Messiah and the gospel. To the heathen the idea would be that of *deliverance, preservation, or safety*.

18. This she did for many days—a considerable number. Compare "certain days," ver. 12. Why Paul did not relieve this poor girl sooner is not told us. If *she* had felt her need and cried for help, doubtless the miracle would have been performed at once. But there is no sign of this sense of need. So far from this the miracle is not performed for her sake, but because of the terrible annoyance the evil spirit gave to Paul. **Being grieved** is too weak a translation. *Being indignant*, having a holy indignation, is nearer the idea. Paul was *pained, sore troubled*, his feelings were *outraged* by these constant and reiterating testimonies of this vile demon. Some worldly minded preachers would have been glad to have the attention of the people aroused by the proclamation of this girl. But Paul was like Christ, in this respect, who charged demons to be silent. (Mark : 12.) Christ and Paul needed no such endorsement. The testi-

fying of the demon to the truth might look like an alliance between him and the preacher, and might cast an evil reflection upon Christ and his messengers.

In the name of Jesus Christ. Paul speaks as the apostle of Jesus Christ, and by his authority, as did Peter in 3 : 6. **He came out the same hour**—demonstrating the power of Christ and the authority of Paul as his representative. (See Mark 1 : 25-27.) The promise of Jesus is thus fulfilled. (Mark 16 : 17. See Luke 9 : 1 with 10 : 17.)

19. When her masters, who were joint owners, saw that the hope of their gain was gone—for the present and future. This is the first purely heathen persecution recorded in the Acts. These men care far less for the girl than for the gains she brought them. Compare the Gergesenes and their feelings at their loss (Matt. 8 : 33-); also the disturbance at Ephesus because the gains from making the shrines of Diana were in danger. (19 : 25-28.) Striking exemplifications of 1 Tim. 6 : 9, 10. **They caught—laid hold of—Paul and Silas.** The idea of violence is implied by this and what follows. Timothy and Luke are not arrested, being less prominent, and perhaps because they were Greeks. **Drew or dragged them into the market-place** or forum, the place of public resort, where business was transacted, and courts of justice were held. **Unto the rulers**, who had general charge of the city government. Meyer regards them as *city judges*, who referred the matter to the *magistrates*, of the next verse.

20. And brought them—her masters *having brought them to the magistrates*—*the dunmri* who in colonial towns were fond of calling themselves *prators*. The two or more *prators* administered justice and exercised functions in colonies similar to those

ing, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, and teach customs which are not lawful for us to receive,

22 neither to observe, being Romans. And the multitude rose up together against them : and the magistrates rent off their

P ch. 17 : 6 ; 1 Kings 18 : 17.

of the consuls at Rome in the days of the republic. (See on ver. 12.) **These men being Jews.** Notice the real ground of complaint is suppressed. To have made prominent the fact that Paul had expelled the demon would have been favorable to him ; and that they had thus lost their hope of gain through the restoration of the damsel to her right mind would not be specially in their favor, either with the magistrates or the multitude. Like the Sanhedrin with Jesus (Mark 14 : 64 ; Luke 23 : 2), they seek a more public pretext. They appeal to their natural and national prejudices. **These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city.** As Jews they were so much the more inexcusable. The Jews and their religion were particularly obnoxious to Romans. The decree of Claudius, banishing the Jews from Rome (18 : 2), about this time, would tend to embitter their prejudices, and stimulate Philippi as a colony to copy after the mother city. Neither the accusers nor the magistrates appear to distinguish between the Christians and the Jews.

21. Expansion and specification of their accusation, showing how these Jews disturbed the city. **And teach customs—announcing or promulgating prescribed usages or institutions.** The word translated *customs* is used of religious observances in 6 : 14 ; 26 : 3 ; 28 : 17. **Which are not lawful for us to receive,** in theory, **neither to observe,** in practice, **being Romans.** "The accusation was partly true and partly false. It was quite false that Paul and Silas were disturbing the colony, for nothing could have been more calm and orderly than their worship and teaching at the house of Lydia, or in the synagogue by the water side. In the other part of the indictment there was a certain amount of truth. The letter of the Roman Law, even under the republic, was opposed to the introduction of foreign religions ; and though exceptions were allowed, as in the case of the Jews

themselves, yet the spirit of the law entirely condemned such changes in worship as were likely to unsettle the minds of the citizens, or to produce any tumultuous uproar ; and the advice given to Augustus, which both he and his successors had studiously followed, was, to check religious innovations as promptly as possible, lest in the end they should undermine the monarchy." (CONY. AND HOWSON *Life of Paul*. Vol. 1, p. 302.) A severe law was enacted about this time, or a little later, against any one not a Jew undergoing the rite of circumcision. *Being Romans* is used in contrast to *being Jews*. They prided themselves in their Roman citizenship, in the Roman colony ; and that despised Jews should impose their religious usages on noble Romans was not to be endured.

22. The prejudices and resentment of the multitude, in this proud Roman town of Philippi, was aroused by such an accusation, and **they rose up together** tumultuously against Paul and Silas, like the blind rabble who joined the Jewish leaders against our Saviour. And like Pilate, the magistrates, having like prejudices, are willingly borne on by the excitement, and, without trial, without giving opportunity for defense, or even the assertion of Roman citizenship, hasten to inflict disgraceful punishment. They even appear to act as leaders of the rabble and with their own hands **rent off** the garments of Paul and Silas, exposing their naked backs and shoulders ready for punishment. **And commanded to beat them with rods.** This command was given to the sergeant (ver. 25), who inflicted the beating. The rods were usually cut from birch or elm trees. Under the Roman method the criminal was stripped, stretched with cords or thongs on a frame, and then beaten. Why Paul and Silas did not declare their citizenship can only be surmised. Perhaps amid the haste and noise they had no opportunity to make themselves heard ; but more

clothes, and commanded to beat them.
23 And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailer to keep them safely:

24 who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

25 And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed,

q ch. 5 : 40 ; 2 Cor. 6 : 5 ; 11 : 23, 25 ; 1 Thess. 2 : 2. r 2 Cor. 11 : 23, 34.

probably, they were inwardly inclined by the Spirit to suffer shame for Christ, that both the glory and the cause of Christ might be further advanced, in the wonderful occurrences which were to follow. This beating with rods was one of the three to which Paul alludes in 2 Cor. 11 : 25 ; the other two are not recorded. He also refers to this disgraceful treatment in 1 Thess. 2 : 2.

23. And when they had laid many stripes or blows upon them— without counting them, there being no merciful limitation as among the Jews. (2 Cor. 11 : 24 ; Deut. 25 : 3.) Doubtless the Lord sustained his servants who counted it their joy that they were worthy to suffer shame for him. (Ver. 25 : 5 : 11.) Mr. Obadiah Holmes, who was publicly whipped in Boston in 1651, because of carrying out his religious convictions, declared that, "as the strokes fell upon me I had such a spiritual manifestation of God's presence as the like thereof I never had nor felt, nor can with fleshly tongue express ; and the outward pain was so removed from me that indeed I am not able to declare it to you." (BACKUS, 194. *Newton.*) (See on ver. 33.) **They, the magistrates, cast them into prison, charging the jailer officially, and probably orally, to keep them safely,** as if they were no ordinary criminals. This great strictness on their part arose probably from their desire to satisfy the infuriated feelings of the populace.

24. The jailer proceeds to obey strictly the order which he had received. There is no wantonness or gratuitous inhumanity implied on his part. "The slight but obvious suggestion of this extenuating circumstance may possibly be owing to the fact that, when the history was written, this Philippian jailer was an eminent disciple." (ALEXANDER.) **Thrust, cast them, not necessarily with violence, into the inner prison,** where there would be greater security, not only from chances of escape, but also from

the fury of a mob. The Roman prison usually was in three parts. The first had light and fresh air ; the second was shut off by strong iron gates with bars and lock, which was the inner prison ; the third was the subterranean dungeon, in which those condemned to death were usually confined. Often the Roman prison was in three stories, the lower one or dungeon being under ground ; the middle on a level with the ground, but like the upper one, approached only through the roof. Such a prison, however, hardly fits the circumstances and description at Philippi. **Their feet fast in the stocks—** in heavy blocks of wood. The feet were stretched apart and fastened into holes. In this case it was used for safe confinement ; but often also as an instrument of torture ; and the feet, hands, and neck were often confined. Compare Jeremiah's treatment, Jer. 20 : 2 ; 38 : 6.

25. We can hardly conceive the miserable condition of Paul and Silas in the inner prison, with its filth, vermin, and lack of air and light, with bleeding and lacerated back, chained and painfully sitting with their feet in the stocks. But in strong contrast their souls were full of joy and peace. **But about midnight they prayed and sang praises.** There were two acts, prayer and praise, yet mingled together, *praying they sang hymns to God.* There was no resentment, no bitter feeling in their hearts, for these could not exist with prayer and praise. They were carrying out our Lord's command to rejoice in persecution, and to pray for their persecutors (Matt. 5 : 10-12, 44), not forgetful, however, of the little church at Lydia's house. And they sang psalms, perhaps the hymns which Pliny says the Christians sang at their meetings before sunrise. The Holy Spirit was with them, and gave them "songs in the night." (Job 35 : 1.) Some suppose they sang Psalms 113-118. Stanzas appropriate to their condition are found in Ps. 40 : 1-4 ; 102 : 19,

and ^asang praises unto God: and the
26 prisoners heard them. And suddenly
there was a great earthquake, so that the
foundations of the prison were shaken:
and immediately ^aall the doors were
opened, and every one's bands were
27 loosed. And the keeper of the prison

awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the
prison doors open, he drew out his sword,
^aand would have killed himself, suppos-
ing that the prisoners had been fled.
28 ^aBut Paul cried with a loud voice, saying,
Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.
29 Then he called for a light, and sprang in,

^a ch. 5 : 41; Job 35 : 10.

^a ch. 5 : 19; 12 : 7, 10.

^a ch. 12 : 19.

^a Lev. 19 : 18.

20; 142 : 5-7. **The prisoners heard them**, rather, were *listening to them*. So earnestly did they throw their souls and their voices into their prayers and praise that the prisoners were awakened, or kept awake. Strange sounds, which they listen to with wonder. Doubtless the jailer, and perhaps some of the prisoners, told Luke of this.

26. God came to their relief while thus engaged in worship by a **great earthquake**, shaking the foundations of the prison. The same power (not the earthquake) at once opened all the doors, both of the inner and outer prison, and loosened the bonds of all the prisoners. How God did this we do not know, but the Creator of all things and the Author of Law knows how to work miraculously in harmony with his own natural and spiritual forces. This great exhibition of miraculous power comes so suddenly and fills all the other prisoners with such astonishment and awe that none attempt to escape. The religious atmosphere pervading this place of prayer and the display of God's power may have quickened their consciences.

27. *The jailer* seems not to have heard the singing, but *being roused out of sleep* by the earthquake and the noise in the prison, and **seeing the prison doors open**, naturally concluded that **the prisoners had escaped**. He thought that disgrace and death awaited him, for under Roman law he must suffer in their stead. Therefore, he determines upon suicide. According to the Roman code of honor it was preferable for one to die by his own hand than by that of an enemy, or an executioner. Philippi had been famous for its suicides. Here Brutus and Cassius put an end to their own lives. Self-murder was common among the Romans and was approved by the Stoic philosophy. **Drew out his sword**—referring to the sword which

he had with him generally and was then wearing. In this military Roman colony, the jailer may have been a soldier, or perhaps subject to military discipline.

28. Paul cried with a loud voice. We are not told how Paul knew the jailer's purpose. Lamps may have been dimly burning and the jailer in a position where Paul could see him; he may have heard him utter exclamations or prayers preparatory to death, and drawing his sword from the scabbard; or it may have been revealed to him, which would be in keeping with the other supernatural wonders. **Do thyself no harm.** The gospel and its messengers come, not to destroy, but to save. **We are all here** implies either that the other prisoners were with them in the inner prison, or near at hand where he could see them. He may, however, have asserted this as an inspired man. (27 : 24, 34.) Paul gives just the reason needed. Other reasons, such as the sinfulness of suicide, he could defer to a more fitting opportunity.

29. Then he called to his attendants, and perhaps to the members of his family who were all aroused (ver. 32), **for a light**—lamps or torches, in order to light the whole prison, and see its condition and all its inmates. **He sprang in**—rushed in impetuously. He recognizes a divine interposition in behalf of Paul and Silas; he is all excitement and terribly in earnest. **And came trembling**—becoming tremulous from fear. Compare Moses trembling in the presence of God in the bush (7 : 32), where the same words are used in the original. As the jailer approaches Paul and Silas a religious awe pervades his whole being. Under a sense of the divine presence and impending judgments, he **fell down**, *prostrated himself before* Paul and Silas, in humble reverence at

and came trembling, and fell down before
30 Paul and Silas, and brought them out,
and said, *Sirs*, what must I do to be
31 saved? And they said, *Believe on the*

Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be
32 saved, and thy house. And they spake
unto him the word of the Lord, and to all

7 ch. 2 : 37; Luke 3 : 10.

• ch. 2 : 38, 39; 13 : 38, 39; John 3 : 16, 36; 6 : 47.

their feet. A strong expression. "It here expresses, in the strongest and most vivid form, the terror and despair of the awakened jailer, and the awe with which he looked upon the two men whom he had so recently committed to the closest and most rigorous confinement." (ALEXANDER.)

30. And brought or led them out from the inner into the outer prison, or perhaps into the courtyard. This was an act of respect and deference. *Sirs, Lords*—used as a title of honor, in addressing persons of distinction, implying respect and reverence. (John 12 : 21.) **What shall I do to be saved**—that I may obtain salvation, for Paul and Silas so understood it and so answered it. (ver. 31.) During the time they had been in Philippi the jailer must have heard of them and known something of their preaching. The possessed damsel had proclaimed them servants of God, who show the way of salvation. Their accusers had laid special stress upon their religious teachings. Possibly the jailer himself had not only seen, but also heard them preach. And now the wonderful displays of divine power convince him that what they claim and teach is true. The earthquake, too, makes death, judgment, human weakness, and sinfulness realities. The Holy Spirit, who is with Paul and Silas, deepens the truth in his heart, and convinces him of his lost condition. Compare how Peter cried out in viewing one of Christ's miracles, "I am a sinful man, O Lord." (Luke 5 : 8.)

31. The answer of Paul and Silas is brief, but comprehensive. It is in harmony with Peter's answer (see on 2 : 38) to the same question on the day of Pentecost. Faith implies repentance; the two are inseparable. Faith is productive of obedience and thus would be followed by baptism. Peter was addressing convicted Jews; Paul, an ignorant but penitent heathen. The latter needed specially to be pointed at once

to the only Saviour; then he could be more fully instructed. (ver. 32.) **Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ**—as the ground of hope and salvation. *Trust in him*; let thy heart and thy affections rest upon him in humble reliance. (Rom. 10 : 10.) The faith required was more than a belief that Jesus existed. (Heb. 11 : 6; James 2 : 19.) It was a *living* faith (James 2 : 17, 18), a *heart*y faith, hence "working by love" (Gal. 5 : 6); an efficacious faith bringing cleansing through the sacrifice and blood of Jesus. (15 : 9.) Notice still further: The jailer had addressed them as *Sirs*, or *lords*; but they point him to the only, the divine Lord, the Son of God; to *Jesus*, the Saviour (Matt. 1 : 21), the Son of man; to *Christ*, the Anointed, the Prophet, the High Priest, and King. The jailer sees him at once as an Almighty and the only Saviour. The meaning of this direction would grow upon him, as he received further instruction, and had a deeper experience. This reply brings to view the great doctrine of justification by faith, so prominent in Paul's epistles. It should be noted that this reply is given before any of his epistles were written, showing that the doctrine was not a mere development, but a fundamental truth of the gospel as he had received it from the Lord. (Gal. 1 : 12.) **And thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house**—a strong concise expression: Not thou alone, but thy house also believing shall be saved. The expression "does not mean that they were to be saved by his faith, but by faith in the same Saviour." (ALEXANDER. To the same effect ALFORD, MEYER, and HACKETT.)

32. They instruct the jailer and his family more fully in the word of the Lord, respecting the way of salvation, and the requirements of faith in Christ. **They spake or talked.** It was probably a conversational discourse. **To or together with all that were in his house.** This seems to

33 that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and 34 all his, straightway. And when he had

brought them into his house, ^a he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

^a Luke 5 : 29; 19 : 6.

have occurred either in the outer prison or in the court yard. (Ver. 30.)

33. The result of the preaching. **And he took them** with him, implying a change of place. "Probably he led them to a neighboring water, perhaps in the court of the house, in which his baptism and that of his household was immediately completed." (MEYER.) **And washed his stripes.** Literally, *from his stripes*. Full of meaning. *He bathed and cleansed him from the blood of his stripes.* The word here translated *washed* means to wash the entire body. Another verb means washing a part of it. See note on John 13 : 10, where both verbs are used. By this deed of kindness the jailer shows his faith and love. How did those *stripes* or *wounds* speak to his heart! Rev. J. C. Grimmell, of Brooklyn, N. Y. says of Rev. G. Burgdorff, who was scourged in Russia, while in the Lord's service: "The dear man showed me the ridges, like the fingers of my hand, left by the lash on his back, before retiring one night, when I happened to share the room with him." From this and the two other beatings and the five scourgings (2 Cor. 11 : 24, 25), did Paul "bear about with him as long as life the marks of Jesus in his body." (Gal. 6 : 17.) **And was baptized, he and all his, immediately.** A beautiful exchange of temporal and spiritual service. The proof and fruit of the faith of the jailer and his house are found in their immediate obedience. There were no infants here. They were all capable of being instructed (ver. 32) and of believing. (Ver. 34.) The prison may have been on the bank of the river Gangas, or the baptism might have been administered in a tank or fountain in the court yard. Immersions have frequently been performed in the prisons of the South. J. T. Christian, D. D., of Mississippi, relates (*Immersion* pp, 98-101) three instances where the immersion was per-

formed in jail, in a bath-tub, or a large trough. Ancient houses usually had reservoirs of rain water; and prisons their swimming baths within their walls. "This case can present no difficulty to the minds of any of you, who may have been within the yard of the prison of this city, or are acquainted with the fact that prison-yards in the East, as well as the yards and gardens of private houses, are usually furnished with tanks of water." (DR. A. JUDSON, *Sermon on Baptism in Calcutta*.)

34. And when he had brought, etc.,—rather, *And having brought them up into his house.* The prison was lower than his house. (See on 12 : 4.) His house may have been over the prison or joined to the prison on higher ground. He had just come up from his baptism, which very likely occurred in one of the reservoirs of the prison. (See ver. 33.) **Set meat before them.** Literally, *He set a table*, a phrase which here means, *He set food before them*, or gave a repast. **Rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.** *He exulted, rejoiced exceedingly.* (2 : 26.) "The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous." (Ps. 118 : 15.) It was the joy of faith and obedience. (8 : 39.) Faith is affirmed of his whole house, *Having with all his house believed in God*, and consequently in his salvation through Christ. Before this he was a heathen; now he believes in the true God. "Thus the meaning will be, Rejoiced that he with all his house had been led to believe (and thus as a necessary consequence to believe *in*) God. The expression *having believed in God*, would only be used of a converted *heathen*, not of a *Jew*." (ALFORD.) There is no ground for infant baptism here. All were old enough to believe.

It may be added that Paul ever retained a joyful remembrance of the Philippian church. From his imprisonment in Rome he calls its members "his joy and his crown." (Phil. 4 : 1.)

35 And when it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go. And the keeper of the prison told this saying to Paul, The magistrates have

sent to let you go: now therefore depart, 37 and go in peace. But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us openly uncondemned, ^bbeing Romans, and have

^b ch. 22 : 25-29.

He urges them again and again to "rejoice in the Lord." (PHIL. 3. 1 : 4. 4.) The very remembrance of them filled him with thanksgiving (PHIL. 1 : 3), and their gifts and care for his welfare filled him with great joy. (PHIL. 4 : 10 f.) His epistle to them is one of the most cheerful and loving of all the writings of the New Testament. In it he reveals more fully his heart and his distinctively personal traits than in any other of his writings.

35. And when it was day—day *having come*, implying that it was early in the day. **The magistrates**—the prætors. (Ver. 20.) **The serjeants**—the *licitors*, who bore a bundle of rods and other insignia of office before the Roman magistrates and executed their orders. Six licitors attended the prætors. The names indicate the colonial government and officers similar to those of Rome. In all these details the accuracy of Luke is manifested. **Let those men go**—somewhat curtly and contemptuously. *Release those fellows*. They had been imprisoned apparently that further charges and proceeding might be had against them. (Ver. 24.) What caused this sudden change can only be surmised. The earthquake may have caused alarm, and aroused their superstitious fears on account of their rash and lawless treatment. They had had time to reflect on their injustice and may have learned a more accurate statement of facts. The clamor of the mob, too, had ceased, and a feeling of reaction naturally came on. For these or other reasons they consider it best to have nothing more to do with them, but quietly get rid of them.

36. The jailer receives the message from the magistrates with joy, and naturally expects a like reception by the prisoners. The licitors do not go into the prison, but the jailer reports their words to Paul. Anticipating their immediate acceptance, but ignorant of their citizenship, the jailer addresses them affectionately, and using a form of Christian salutation, says, Now

therefore, depart, and go in peace—go unmolested and prosper. (15 : 33.)

37. The jailer, however, did not consider the manner of their release. To be sent away as if they had simply suffered just punishment, would naturally cast suspicions on them wherever they went. Fortunately the means of avoiding this was at hand. **Paul said to them**—through the jailer. Notice the brevity, fullness, and energy of this reply. Almost every word is an allegation; every particular strengthens the complaint. Beaten, publicly, without trial, and they too Roman citizens, and then ignominiously cast into prison! And now do they cast us out privately? Nay! Let them come themselves officially, with due apology, and bring us out honorably. **They have beaten us**—a different verb from that used in ver. 22, but expressing strongly the severest kind of scourging. This was a disgrace. **Openly**—publicly before the people, which added to the ignominy. **Uncondemned**—without even a form of trial. Treated like dogs, for even slaves had a right of defense before punishment. A trial in due form was one of the sacred rights of the citizen. And all this indignity cast upon **us men that are Romans**. By being *Romans* is meant that honorary citizenship, by which special privileges were granted to certain individuals and families, entitling them to certain immunities and advantages enjoyed by native Romans. The Porcian and Valerian laws exempted all Roman citizens from stripes and tortures. "It is a crime," said Cicero, "to bind a Roman citizen, a crime to scourge him; it is almost parricide that he should be executed." To break these laws exposed the magistrates to indictment for treason, the penalty being death and confiscation of property. Paul was a Roman by birth. (See on 22 : 28.) How Silas obtained his citizenship is not recorded. **And have cast us into prison**—a still further

cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? Nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out. And the sergeants told these words unto the magistrates. And they feared, when they heard that they were Romans: and they came and besought them, and

brought them out, and desired them to depart out of the city. And they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them and departed.

* Matt. 8 : 34.

* ver. 14.

indignity under the circumstances. Such close and cruel confinement did not become a Roman citizen without conviction or confession of crime. **And now do they thrust us out privily.** Having cast us into prison publicly and wrongfully, do they now attempt to shield their crime and, without apology or reparation, cast us out thus secretly? **Nay verily**—we will not submit to such a dismissal. The prisoners now had the magistrates in their power, and by complaint to the proper authorities might have procured their punishment. They were in a position to dictate terms. Having obeyed the letter of Christ's command, "Resist not evil," etc. (Matt. 5 : 29), they now claim their legal rights, as a mode of asserting their innocence, and also of protecting their converts from such mob violence as they had suffered. As to the reason of their not claiming their citizenship before, see on ver. 22. **Let them come themselves** instead of sending their servants, **and fetch us out**—as a proof of our innocence, and an apology for their injustice. Thus they propose to let them off easily. They act upon the rule Paul afterward enjoined "Avenge not yourselves, but rather give place to wrath," etc. (Rom. 12 : 19.) Such a course also would reflect favorably upon the church at Philippi. It would prove partly a moral and civil defense. The church had been founded not by mere Jews, but by Roman citizens. The wrong done it and its founders would react in its favor.

38. When the magistrates heard that Paul and Silas were Romans they feared—or were frightened, knowing that they were liable to severe punishment. (See on ver. 37.) Public officers who could be led, and would even fall in with a thoughtless mob, would most likely prove cowardly, and not only fear punishment, but also the national jealousy of their own citizens, which

had shown itself the day before. (Ver. 20-22.)

39. With due haste the magistrates came and besought them, strove to appease them by entreaty. Apologizing with fair words they begged not to make complaint against them. Dr. Hackett quotes from Lucian a case of false imprisonment, in which a governor of a province not only confessed his error, but paid a large sum to the injured parties, to bribe them to be silent. And when they had brought them out of the prison in a most respectful manner, they desired, asked them as a favor, that they would depart out of the city, in order to insure their own safety and the public peace. Paul and Silas comply with the request, but take their own time. (Ver. 40.)

40. Without showing either timidity or haste, Paul and Silas go from the prison to the house of Lydia, where they had been guests, and where the church was accustomed to meet. And seeing the brethren, of the church, together with Timothy and Luke, who were probably assembled for this purpose. They comforted—rather, they exhorted them, to be firm in the faith (11 : 23), which includes consolation and encouragement. The divine interposition in their behalf, and the humiliation of the magistrates, were reasons of great encouragement and hope to the infant church. **And departed.** From here to 20 : 6 Luke continues the narrative in the third person, from which it is inferred that he was left behind to watch over the church. The comparative brevity of the account which follows of the work in Thessalonica and Berea indicates that Luke was not with them. Timothy also probably tarried for a time. The next notice of him is at Berea (17 : 14), whither he may have gone after further labors at Philippi. But more probably he rejoins Paul at

Thessalonica, at one of the times when supplies were sent him from Philippi. (Phil. 4 : 15, 16.) Paul joins the name of Timothy with his own in his epistle to that church. (Phil. 1 : 1.) The Philippian church appears from its very beginning onward a model church. (Phil. 1 : 3-6 ; 2 : 12.) See further in closing note on ver. 34 ; also the closing note on ver. 15.

CHILDREN AND THE CHURCH. Paul and Silas spake the word of the Lord not only to the jailer, but to all that were in his house. There could not have been infants among them, for all were capable of being addressed, and of understanding. Yet children, at an early age can know that they are sinners and can understand how Christ died and mediates for them. They are capable of sorrow, of trusting and loving ; and so can repent toward God and believe in Jesus Christ. It is the duty of pastors and churches to seek the conversion of children, and attend to their training. This accords with the teaching of Christ and his apostles. (Mark 10 : 14 ; Matt. 21 : 15, 16 ; Eph. 6 : 4.)

PRACTICAL REMARKS.

1. The mother makes the man. How many, like Timothy, are the result of maternal prayers and instructions. (Ver. 1 ; 2 Tim. 1 : 5 ; 3 : 15 ; 1 Sam. 1 : 26-28.)

2. We should seek out young men of proper qualifications for positions of usefulness in our churches. (Ver. 2 ; Titus 1 : 5 f.)

3. There are times when it is proper to accede to the prejudices of others, when no Christian principle is involved. (Ver. 3 ; 21 : 23-26 ; 1 Cor. 9 : 21.)

4. The words and the examples of the apostles, as inspired men, are to be heeded and observed. (Ver. 4 ; 1 Cor. 11 : 1 ; 2 Peter 3 : 15, 16.)

5. Wise and conciliatory measures generally result in the increase and strengthening of the churches. (Ver. 5 ; 6 : 7.)

6. How much unwritten history of Paul's life do the Acts and the Epistles suggest. (Ver. 6 ; Gal. 1 : 2 ; 4 : 13 ; 2 Cor. 11 : 27.)

7. We should seek to know the leadings and hindrances of the Spirit, and at the same time not confound them with those of Satan. (Ver. 7, 8 ; 1 Thess. 2 : 13 ; 1 John 4 : 1.)

8. God often keeps us from certain fields of usefulness, because he has more important ones for us to occupy. (Ver. 8-10 ; Rom. 15 : 22.)

9. The unconscious needs of the heathen world are constantly appealing to his people for sympathy and help. (Ver. 9.)

10. When assured of the divine will we should obey at once. (Ver. 10 ; 26 : 19 ; Gal. 1 : 16.)

11. In God's providence the wind and the weather often assist his servants to do his will. (Ver. 11 ; Ps. 104 : 3, 4.)

12. The day of Paul's entrance into Europe and Philippi was one of the most important in history. (Ver. 12.)

13. Christianity is a silent but permanent force. It conquers hearts and changes the lives of men. Compare Alexander passing from Europe and conquering Asia (his kingdom long since having passed away), and Paul with his three companions entering Europe, and their work still remaining. (Ver. 13 ; 2 Cor. 10 : 4.)

14. The place of prayer should always have attractions to the people of God. (Ver. 13, 16 ; Ps. 42 : 2 ; Mal. 3 : 16.)

15. Divine and human agency are united in the salvation of men. (Ver. 14 ; 2 : 37, f.)

16. How happy those households who have accepted Christ by faith and professed him in baptism. (Ver. 14, 33.)

17. It is fitting to exercise Christian hospitality towards God's servants. (Ver. 15 ; Rom. 12 : 13 ; 1 Peter 4 : 9.)

18. In Lydia and the soothsaying damsel we see the contrast in the condition of women under the gospel and in heathenism. (Ver. 14-16.)

19. There can be no league nor truce between the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of Satan. (Ver. 17, 18 ; 2 Cor. 6 : 15 ; 1 John 3 : 8.)

20. Much of the opposition to the gospel arises from the fact that it opposes dishonest gain, and makes men honest and conscientious. (Ver. 19, 20 ; Titus 2 : 12.)

21. Wicked men sometimes become hypocritically conscientious, and supporters of law and order, if religion encroaches on their business. (Ver. 21 ; 1 Kings 18 : 17 ; Amos 7 : 10.)

22. They who are faithful in opposing and condemning sin may expect to suffer from the prejudices and hatred of the world. (Ver. 22-24 ; 2 Tim. 3 : 12.)

Paul and Silas at Thessalonica and Berea.

17 Now when they had passed through

Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue

* 1 and 2 Thess. 1 : 1.

23. It is an honor to suffer with Christ and for his sake. (Ver. 22-24; 5 : 41; 1 Peter 4 : 16.)

24. A prison with its chains and stocks can be made a house of God and a gate to heaven to the believing soul. (Ver. 25; Ps. 34 : 1, 7, 18, 20; 1 John 5 : 4.)

25. God will sooner or later come to the deliverance of his suffering people. (Ver. 26; Luke 18 : 6-8.)

26. The law strikes terror to the convicted soul. (Ver. 27; Rom. 7 : 9-11.)

27. The gospel brings hope and life. (Ver. 28; Gal. 3 : 22-26.)

28. Sinners have reason to tremble on account of their sins. (Ver. 29; Nahum 1 : 6.)

29. The jailer asked the supreme question of every soul, "What must I do to be saved." (Ver. 30; 2 : 37; 9 : 22 : 10.)

30. The jailer's inquiry implies fear, conviction of sin, desire, hope, and submission. (Ver. 30.)

31. Neither sincerity nor works can save; but faith in Christ. The latter is a *living* faith, hearty, sincere, and obedient. (Ver. 31; 26 : 9; Phil. 3 : 4-10; 1 Tim. 1 : 12-16.)

32. As jailers were generally selected from the lower classes of society, so here we may have an example of the conversion of a man of a course and brutal nature. (Ver. 32, 33; Mark 5 : 15.)

33. Among the evidences of conversion are changed conduct in attending to the truth, in ministering lovingly to the saints, and in promptly obeying Christ's commands. (Ver. 34; John 14 : 21; 2 Cor. 5 : 17; 1 John 3 : 14.)

34. Regeneration, which is the work of the Holy Spirit, is instantaneous. So conversion, in which the soul turns to God, may often be immediately recognized. (Ver. 34; 2 : 41.)

35. There is no joy like that which flows from believing in Jesus. (Ver. 34; 1 Peter 1 : 8; John 4 : 14.)

36. Wicked men often try to palliate their deeds; but all such attempts will prove vain. (Ver. 35, 36; 1 Kings 18 : 17, 18.)

37. Though Christians are to exercise meekness under injuries, yet there are times, especially when the honor of religion is in-

involved, when they should insist on their legal rights. (Ver. 37; 23 : 3.)

38. Christianity does not make a man any less a citizen, and it is sometimes his duty to appeal to civil authority. (Ver. 37, 38; 25 : 10-12.)

39. If citizenship on earth is to be highly prized, how much more the citizenship in heaven. (Ver. 37-40; Phil. 3 : 20.)

40. Satan and wicked men may for a time seem victorious, but they are hastening on to sure defeat. Christ and his cause will in due time come forth from the conflict victorious over every foe. (Ver. 38-40; 1 Cor. 15 : 25.)

Ch. 17 : Paul continues his second missionary journey. Proceeding with Silas from Philippi to Thessalonica, they preach with much success; but, after a time, are forced to flee to Berea. Here they gain many converts, but again Paul is compelled to leave, and going to Athens he preaches in the synagogue, in the market, and on Mars' Hill.

1-15. PAUL AND SILAS AT THESSALONICA AND BEREA. (Phil. 4 : 14-16; 1 Thess. 1 : 4, 5, 9, 10; 2 : 9, 14, 18; 3 : 1, 2, 14; 2 Thess. 3 : 7, 8.) If our former estimates of time are correct, then it was about the first of May, A. D. 52, when Paul arrived at Thessalonica. He must have remained there at least a month, probably longer; for during his stay there the Philippian brethren sent twice to him donations toward his support. (Phil. 4 : 16.)

1. Now when they had passed, journeyed, through Amphipolis and Apollonia—without stopping to labor in either place, because there were no Jews, or at least no synagogue in either of these cities. Paul and Silas go alone, Luke and Timothy being left behind. (See on 16 : 40.) They travel on the great Roman military road, the Egnatian Way, a continuation of the Appian Way, which led from the Asiatic provinces to Rome. *Amphipolis* was about thirty-two miles southwest of Philippi, three miles from the sea, on the east bank of the river Strymon, which bounded it on three sides, and gave it its name—*Round-*

2 of the Jews. And Paul, as his manner was, ^fwent in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the 3 Scriptures, ^gopening and alleging, ^hthat

Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; ⁱand that this Jesus whom I preach unto you, is Christ. 4 ^kAnd some of them believed, and con-

^f ch. 9 : 20; 13 : 5, 14; 14 : 1; 16 : 13; 19 : 8; Luke 4 : 16. ^g Luke 24 : 32. ^h Luke 24 : 26, 44, 46; Gal. 3 : 1. ⁱ ch. 2 : 36. ^k ch. 28 : 24.

about-town. It was the capital of the first division of Macedonia, and an important military station. Its former name was *The Nine Ways*, the number of roads which met here. It is not mentioned elsewhere in Scripture. *Apollonia*, only mentioned here in the Bible, was about thirty-two miles westward, an unimportant town, the exact site of which is unknown. A little village called *Polloua*, with ruins just south of Lake *Beelick*, may mark its site. Paul and Silas probably passed at least a night in each of these places. **They came to Thessalonica**—about thirty-six miles further on, making a hundred miles from Philippi. They could perform this whole journey in three days, but may have taken a week, or even more, if weakness or soreness from their scourging necessitated it, and if desirous of exploring the places through which they passed, as fields of labor. Thessalonica was an important commercial city on a declivity at the northeast corner of the bay of Thermæ. It had been known by the name of Thermæ. It was rebuilt by Cassander, one of Alexander's generals, and renamed after his wife, Thessalonica, sister to Alexander the Great. When the Romans divided Macedonia into four governments, it was made the capital of the second. Afterward, when the whole was consolidated into one province, it became the metropolis, and such it was at this time. The Roman government had made it a free city, having the right of self-government, but not all the privileges of a *colony*, like Philippi. Its great commercial importance, rivalling Corinth and Ephesus, made it a centre from which the gospel was widely disseminated. (1 Thess. 1 : 8.) Its modern name is *Saloniki*. It has a population of about seventy thousand, of whom about twenty thousand are Jews. **Where there was a synagogue of the Jews**—some manuscripts read, *the synagogue*,

implying that it was the only one in all that large district of country through which Paul had passed, doubtless the first he had reached in Macedonia. The synagogue was of so great advantage to Paul in his work, that Luke seldom fails to speak of it whenever Paul found one. (Ver. 10, 17.)

2. Paul as his custom was. (See on 13 : 5. Compare 16 : 13; 17 : 10; 18 : 4.) He imitated the custom of his Master. (Luke 4 : 16.) **And three sabbath days**—indicating that for three weeks he continued his ministry in the synagogue. Paul sought first to convert the Jews wherever he went, and through them to reach devout and inquiring Gentiles. **Reasoned with them**—as in a dialogue, thus giving opportunity for asking and answering questions. Thus Jesus taught in the synagogue. (John 6 : 25-69.) **Out of the Scriptures**—the source and standard of appeal in all his teaching to the Jews.

3. What Paul taught from the Scriptures. First, *that the Christ must suffer and rise again from the dead.* (See Luke 24 : 26, 27.) Second, *that this Jesus whom I proclaim unto you is the Christ.* Having proved the first proposition from the prophets, it was easy to demonstrate the second, that Jesus had suffered, died, and risen, and exactly answered the demands of prophecy. (9 : 22.) Paul's discourse at Antioch of Pisidia illustrates the character of his preaching. (13 : 17-41.) **Opening and alleging**—or *setting forth* the true interpretation of the Old Testament Scriptures.

During the intervening weeks Paul and Silas supported themselves "work-ing night and day" (1 Thess. 2 : 9), and thus showing that they were not governed by selfish motives. Timothy, too, may have come with supplies from Philippi. (Ver. 10.)

4. The result of the three Sabbaths' labors. And some of them—of the Jews—**believed**, or, literally, *were*

sorted with Paul and ¹Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.

5 But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd

fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of ^mJason, and sought to bring them out to the people. And when they found them not,

¹ ch. 15 : 22, 27, 32, 40. ^m Rom. 16 : 21.

convinced of the truth that Jesus was the Christ. **And consorted**, literally, were allotted, or added to Paul and Silas as the fruit of their ministry, and in the formation of a church. (See 2 : 41.) They were added by the determining power of God. (1 Thess. 2 : 13; 2 Thess. 2 : 13, 14.) **Of the devout Greeks—**worshipping Gentiles. These were proselytes and other religious Greeks who worshipped in the synagogues, without conforming to all the Jewish rites and customs. **Of the chief women**—the first in rank and influence. These, too, were devout Gentiles. **A great multitude . . . not a few**—thus the majority of the converts were Gentiles. Paul says of these great results, "Our gospel came to you not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance (1 Thess. 1 : 5), which implies the ordinary and extraordinary workings of the Spirit, and perhaps the working of miracles. After these three Sabbaths Paul probably found it best to withdraw from the synagogue as a place of preaching. He now began, if not previously during the week time, his work among the heathen with great success, to which Paul alludes in 1 Thess. 1 : 9, "How ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God." Luke, not being an eye witness, reports briefly the beginning of the church from the synagogues, and then at once passes over to the persecution, which started from the synagogue, and drove Paul and Silas from the city.

5. The work goes on among the heathen for a time. **The Jews are moved with envy**—with indignant jealousy at this success, especially among Gentiles. (See on 13 : 45.) **Which believed not**—omitted by the best authorities. These persecuting Jews were, of course, unbelievers. **Took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort**—better, Took

unto them certain vicious men of the market-place. These were market loungers, the rabble without regular employment, who frequented public places. The market, or *Agora*, was a place in Greek cities for public assembly, for traffic and the transaction of public business. (Ver. 17.) "Had it been in the East, where such people loiter about the gates, the term would have been inappropriate. It is instructive to observe how true the narrative is to the habits of different nations, though the scene changes so rapidly from one land to another." (HACKETT.) But why did the Jews seek such helpers? Because they themselves were foreigners and had but little influence among the people. To effect their purpose they must secure the help of the natives. **Gathered a company, or a crowd**—they raised a mob and set the city in an uproar, raising a noise and causing confusion. **And assaulting—coming suddenly upon—the house of Jason**, implying an actual attack. Paul and Silas appear to have lodged at his house during their stay at Thessalonica. (Ver. 7.) If not a disciple, he appears as a friend and a host. Whether Jason was the same as the one mentioned in Rom. 16 : 21, a kinsman of Paul, is uncertain. Perhaps he was a Grecian Jew, whose name Jesus, or Joshua, had been changed into the Greek form Jason. (1 Mac. 8 : 17; 2 Mac. 4 : 7, with Josephus. *Antiq.* XII, 5, 1.) The word **people** does not refer to the mob, but rather the regular assembly of citizens in their legal capacity (Thessalonica being a free city), in whose presence cases were tried before the magistrates.

6. They sought, but found them not—Paul and Silas being absent providentially, or, perhaps, hearing of the tumult, had withdrawn to some place of temporary safety. Failing in their immediate purpose, they spent their spite upon Jason and certain

they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, ^a These that have turned the world upside down ⁷ are come hither also; whom Jason hath received; ^c and these all do contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, ^d saying that there

8 is another king, *one* Jesus. And they ^e troubled the people and the rulers of the ⁹ city, when they heard these things. And when they had taken security of Jason, and of ^f the other, they let them go. ¹⁰ And ^g the brethren immediately sent

^a ch. 16 : 20; see Am. 7 : 10.

^c ch. 16 : 21.

^e Luke 23 : 2; John 19 : 12.

^g Matt. 2 : 3.

^d ver. 6. ^f ver. 14; ch. 9 : 25.

brethren as accomplices, and drew, dragged them violently unto the rulers, or *politarchs* of the city. In a free city like Thessalonica these *politarchs* were chosen by the people, and they held general jurisdiction over all criminal matters, having the power of life and death. It is a curious fact that while the name *politarch* is unknown to classical literature, it is found in an inscription on the ruins of an ancient arch of Thessalonica, which gives the name of seven *politarchs* who governed the city before the visit of Paul, and three of them are the same names as three of Paul's companions: Sopater, of Berea (20 : 4); Gaius, of Macedonia (19 : 29), and Secundus, of Thessalonica. Thus do we have here a striking confirmation of the accuracy of Luke. **Crying**—*shouting* vociferously. Two charges are specified, each containing some truth. **These that have turned the world upside down**—who have excited tumults and made the world rebellious. In their excitement they utter words of exaggeration; yet unconsciously utter a great truth. Christianity is revolutionary; and wherever Paul preached, selfishness, idolatry, and immorality had been overthrown, and opposition and persecution aroused. (Matt. 10 : 34, 35.) **Are come hither also**—implying that reports of Christianity and of gospel preachers had preceded the coming of Paul and Silas.

7. A specific charge is made against Jason, **Whom Jason hath received** into his house, and under his protection. (Luke 10 : 38; 19 : 6.) Now comes the second general charge. **These all**, Paul, Silas, and indeed Christians wherever found, *are acting contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying there is another king, Jesus*. The authority of Cæsar, the emperor, extended over all Greece.

According to the Julian Laws, "whoever violated the majesty of the state" was guilty of treason. So general a law was of wide application. The charge was doubtless a Jewish slander, like that brought against Jesus. (Matt. 27 : 11, 12.) The title *Lord*, so commonly applied by the disciples to Jesus, would give color to their charge. Besides, the second coming and reign of Christ were favorite topics of Paul's preaching at Thessalonica, as may be gathered from his two Epistles to the church there. Compare such statements as those in 1 Thess. 2 : 12; 3 : 13; 2 Thess. 1 : 5-10; 2 : 1-12. The accusation was perverted truth. Another incidental illustration of Luke's exactness may be noted in the use of the word *king*. The Romans never styled the Emperor *king*, but Greek writers constantly apply the term to Roman Emperors.

8. And these accusers **troubled the people and rulers, *politarchs*, of the city**—caused them anxiety and alarm, lest the presence of disloyal persons, and revolutionary tumults, should bring upon them Roman vengeance.

9. **When they had taken security**, or *guarantee*—supposed to be a Roman law-phrase similar to *taking bail*. Jason and the brethren who had been arrested (ver. 6) became responsible and perhaps deposited a sum of money as a surety, that the peace of the city should be kept, and that no attempt should be made against the majesty and power of Rome by these strangers who had come to them, or by their adherents.

10. As it was specially in behalf of Paul and Silas who were not present that Jason and certain brethren had given surety or bail, so in sending them away the end would be best attained. The missionaries would not be present to arouse suspicion and opposition. Silas a little later remained a while at Berea (ver. 14), but from here, and at this time,

away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming *thither* went into the synagogue of the Jews. These were more

noble than those in Thessalonica, in that ^tthey received the word with all readiness of mind, and ^usearched the Script-

^t Matt. 13 : 23.

^u Isa. 34 : 16; John 5 : 39.

it seemed best that both should go. And that, too, **immediately**, probably during the ensuing night. (See 9 : 25, 30.) Coming forth from their concealment, they are now sent away secretly **by night**, to avoid danger from the Jewish persecutors and the mob. But this did not put an end to persecution, for the converts were afterward ill-treated. (1 Thess. 2 : 14.) Leaving them so hastily, Paul intended to return to them soon again; but he was hindered twice; whereupon he sent Timothy to them. (1 Thess. 2 : 17, 18; 3 : 2.) Since Paul received supplies from the Philippian church twice while here (Phil. 4 : 15, 16), it is reasonable to suppose that Timothy was the bearer of one of them; and that he remained for a time after Paul left. "I believe Timothy to have been with them at Thessalonica the first time, because it does not seem probable that Paul would have sent to them one to confirm and exhort them concerning their faith (1 Thess. 3 : 2) who had not known them before, especially as he then had Silas with him." (ALFORD.) Notice also that Timothy's name is joined with Paul and Silas, in both 1 Thess. 1 : 1 and 2 Thess. 2 : 1. From these gifts and from working at tent making, possibly with Jason (ver. 5; 18 : 4), Paul supported himself without help from the Thessalonians. (1 Thess. 2 : 9; 2 Thess. 3 : 8.)

It is interesting to compare the narrative of Philippi with that of Thessalonica; and notice how Luke conforms his language to the actual conditions of each. One is a colony; the other a free city; the former a Roman city, the latter a Greek city. Roman citizenship is emphasized in one; Cæsar and his friends in the other. Prætor and lictors appear in Philippi; politarchs and the *demus*, or free lawful assembly of the *people*, in Thessalonica. Religious usages unlawful to Romans are specially dreaded there; disloyalty to Cæsar here.

From Thessalonica Paul and Silas leave the Egnatian Way and take a less

traversed road to **Berea**, now called *Verria*, about forty-five miles to the southwest. It is on the eastern slope of the Olympian range, and with an abundant supply of water, being on the Astrieus river, a tributary of the Haliaemon. It was a city in the eastern district of Macedonia; and its secluded situation doubtless was an important reason for Paul and Silas seeking this retreat. Its modern population number about six thousand. **Who coming thither went away**, etc.—having arrived at Berea and as soon as practicable after necessary arrangements, they go away to the synagogue, which may have been out of the city, or some distance from their lodging.

11. These were more noble than those in Thessalonica—literally, of *better birth*. But the word is also used with reference to disposition and character; and this appears to be the meaning here from what follows. They gave evidence of this disposition, **in that they received the word**, they listened to the preaching of the gospel, **with all readiness**. They were less narrow in their Jewish prejudices than their brethren at Thessalonica. They were open to conviction. Hence **they searched the Scriptures daily**, as their authority and standard of appeal, **whether these things were so**. This spirit of honest inquiry showed their nobility of soul. They were not superstitious like the Lyncæans (14 : 11), nor impulsive like the Galatians (Gal. 4 : 14, 15), but patient, impartial, and conscientious.

12. The result of such honest hearing and such earnest examination of the Scriptures by those of the synagogue was, that **many of them, therefore believed**. The best way to prove the claims of Jesus and the truth of the gospel is to thoroughly and honestly investigate. An impartial and patient study of the gospel usually results in its acceptance. **Also of honorable**, etc.—better, *And of*

ures daily, whether those things were so.
 12 Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few.
 13 But when the Jews of Thessalonica had

knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berea, they came thither also, and stirred up the people.
 14 *And then immediately the brethren sent away Paul to go as it were to the sea:

* Matt. 10 : 23.

honorable Grecian women and men not a few. These were largely proselytes and devout Gentiles, though very likely, as at Thessalonica, extending into the heathen population. The female converts were probably more numerous than the men. The term *honorable*, the same as in 13 : 50, refers to their social rank, holding influential positions in the community. This again brings to view the great influence of women in the Macedonian churches. (ver. 4; 16 : 14, 15, 40.) Notice that the Jews at Antioch in Pisidia, use the same rank of women (but superstitious and ignorant) to carry out their plans of persecution against Paul and Barnabas. (13 : 50.) The Christian women of our day who labor so earnestly and successfully, both at home and abroad, are the true spiritual successors of these Macedonian sisters. Rome has unwisely cut off thousands of women from family relations, affections, and duties, and with solemn vows colonized them in nunneries. Men and women, in God's work, should not ignore their place in the family. "God made the family; man made the convent. God's work! behold, it is very good; man's is in this case a snare." (ARNOT.)

13. Paul and Silas must have spent some weeks in this quiet and somewhat secluded city. Paul speaks in 1 Thess. 2 : 18 of twice proposing to visit the Thessalonian brethren; but was hindered by Satan. Perhaps he was the first time purposing such a visit when this persecution began, and frustrated his plans. But his place of labor could not be hid. **The Jews of Thessalonica**, ever on the alert, hear that the gospel is preached at Berea, and show their inveterate hatred by following Paul and Silas and stirring up hostility similar to that in their own city. So in the first missionary journey Jews in like manner came to Lystra, from Antioch and Iconium, and stirred up

persecution. (14 : 19.) **Stirred up**, etc. Westcott and Hort, according to many ancient manuscripts read, *Stirring up and troubling the multitudes*. Notice how carefully Luke uses terms. Here it is the multitude, or *populace*; in Thessalonica it is the *demus*, or orderly assembly (ver. 5); but at Philippi, he says nothing of either, but mentions the *rulers and prators*. (16 : 19, 20.)

The narrative implies that the Jews were quite numerous and influential at Berea. The church there doubtless continued to prosper. We have no epistle of Paul to this church; and so we have none to the churches of Cilicia (15 : 41), and to some others which he founded. Besides, he wrote many letters which have not come down to us. (1 Cor. 5 : 9; Col. 4 : 16.) Sopater, who afterward became a companion of Paul (20 : 4), was probably converted at this time.

14. And then immediately—as soon as the disturbance began. It was best for the church and for Paul that he should go; for he was the great object of Jewish hostility, and prejudices and violence could easily be aroused against him, which would also fall upon his companions and the whole church. **The brethren**—indicating a congregation, or church. **To go as it were to the sea**—implying a feint, that Paul started in the direction of the sea, but turned and took the land route to Athens, two hundred and fifty miles. That such a journey might be possible, see 20 : 2-4. But the reading best attested by manuscripts is: *The brethren sent away Paul to go as far as to the sea*, which implies that he went by sea. The probability is, that leaving Berea so suddenly, Paul's plans were only partially formed, subject to such modifications as circumstances might suggest. He and his conductors start for the sea, and there they find a vessel bound for Athens, in which they embark. And

but Silas and Timotheus abode there still.
 15 And they that conducted Paul brought him unto Athens: and receiving a commandment unto Silas and Timotheus for

to come to him with all speed, they departed.

Paul at Athens.

16 NOW while Paul waited for them at

7 ch. 18 : 5.

Silas and Timothy **abode**, or *remained still* at Berea. Silas appears to have been with Paul up to this time; but Timothy had been left behind at Philippi (16:1, 40), and although not mentioned with Paul at Thessalonica, yet he probably joined him there. (See on ver. 10.)

15. And they that conducted or escorted Paul. A delegation of the Berean brethren accompanied Paul throughout the journey for guidance and protection, and **brought him unto Athens**—the renowned capital of ancient Greece. Perhaps Paul's infirmities (16:6) may have been such as to render it needful that his movements should now be guided by others. From what we know of ancient roads from Berea to the sea, it is probable that Paul was conducted to Dium, a Roman colony like Philippi, about sixteen miles away, where they embarked for Athens. With favorable winds, it has been estimated that this voyage of two hundred and fifty miles could have been made in about three days. "The memorials of the country's greatness rose around him on his journey. As he quitted Berea, he could see behind him the snowy peaks of Mount Olympus, where the deities of Greece had been supposed to dwell. Soon he was sailing past Thermopylae, where the immortal Three Hundred stood against the barbarian myriads; and as his voyage neared its close, he saw before him the island of Salamis, where again the existence of Greece was saved from extinction by the valor of her sons." (STALKER, p. 95.) The conductors of Paul appear to have returned from Athens immediately. **They departed, having received a charge to Silas and Timothy to come to him as soon as possible**—as soon as they could complete the work for which they were left behind. If they came at once to Athens, then they must have returned to Macedonia, for not long after this they come from Mace-

donia to Corinth. (18:5.) It is not at all unlikely that they reached Athens after Paul had left, and then followed him to Corinth. But 1 Thess. 3:1, 2 is appealed to, as a proof that Timothy came at this time to Athens, from whence he was sent to Thessalonica: "Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left alone; and sent Timothy. . . to establish you," etc. But this appeal seems not well taken; for Paul had now *left* Silas and Timothy *behind*, whereas in the visit mentioned in 1 Thess. 3:1, Timothy had *left* Paul *behind*. In this Paul is going away from Thessalonica; in that his face is toward that city, but being hindered by Satan the second time, he sends Timothy in his place. (1 Thess. 2:18; 3:1.) The best solution of the difficulty is the suggestion that Paul with Timothy paid a later and second visit to Athens when he was proposing to proceed to Macedonia, but was hindered from carrying out his plans and therefore sent Timothy instead. See on 18:5, 11, 12; and discussion in *Harmonic Arrangement of the Acts*, pp. 214-218.

16-34. PAUL AT ATHENS. HIS SPEECH ON MARS' HILL. (Ps. 9:8; Isa. 42:5.) If Paul arrived at Thessalonica about May 1st, A. D. 52, then he could not well have reached Athens before July. His work at Berea was probably brief, being suddenly cut short, and hence the necessity of Silas and Timothy remaining to complete the work. Neither did he tarry long at Athens, for the field was uninviting. Wieseler suggests two weeks.

16. Athens is said to have been founded by Cecrops and an Egyptian colony, about 1550 B. C., and was called Cecropia, but afterwards was named Athens in honor of the heathen goddess Minerva, whose name in Greek was Athenæ. It was the capital of Attica, and the chief seat of Grecian learning and civilization during the golden period of Greek history. It was situ-

Athens, ²his spirit was stirred in him,

when he saw the city wholly given to

* Ps. 119 : 136 ; 2 Peter 2 : 8.

ated on the plain of Attica, and the city proper was about three miles from the sea. It had two seaports, Piræus its principal harbor, and Phalerum, which being nearest to Macedonia may have been the one where Paul landed. It at length fell into the hands of Rome, when in B. C. 40, with the country of Achaia, it was made a Roman province, and received the privileges of "a free city." (Ver. 1.) Its commerce was destroyed, but philosophy, literature, and art continued to flourish. In the centre of the city was a rocky eminence, about 150 feet high, called the Acropolis, and surmounted by many temples, chief among which was the Parthenon, or temple of the virgin Athene. A little northwest of the Acropolis was *Mars' Hill*. (Ver. 22.) And in the valley, west of the Acropolis and south of *Mars' Hill*, was the Agora or *market*. (Ver. 18.) Other hills and places of interest not mentioned by Luke need not here be noticed. The city was a vast museum of learning, sculpture, and art. In Paul's day four hundred years had elapsed since its golden age; and although it had experienced a sad decline, it was still the intellectual capital of the civilized world, whither swarmed philosophers of different schools, teachers and professors of all kinds of knowledge, wealthy strangers, and students for study, from all nations. Philosophy, however, had degenerated into sophistry, and while the various schools had their adherents, they were without great leaders.

While Paul waited for them at Athens—for Silas and Timothy. This implies that Paul expected them soon, and that he was not proposing to make Athens at this time a place of special or prolonged missionary labor. It is also against the supposition of some (1 Thess. 3 : 1, 2), that on leaving Berea he had sent Timothy to Thessalonica; for in such a case he would not be expecting him so soon. That Timothy came to Athens, and Paul sent him back to Thessalonica, is improbable on many accounts. So many hundred miles of travel is scarcely probable at

this time. Besides, Luke relates that Silas and Timothy not long after came to Paul at Corinth. The plain inference from the whole narrative is that their coming was the one thing Paul was waiting for at Athens; but that for some reason he did not tarry long enough, but preceded them to Corinth, where they joined him. From 1 Thess. 2 : 18 ; 3 : 1, it appears that Paul had been anxious to visit Thessalonica, and had been hindered twice from doing so. A few weeks before he had been compelled to flee from that city by night; and it seems scarcely possible that within that brief period he had been so anxious to return that he made two attempts and had been twice hindered. Paul's references in his Epistle demand more time, and point to a second visit to Athens which Luke has not recorded. Such a visit it would be perfectly natural to expect, and agrees with what he says in 1 Thess. 3 : 1. (See on ver. 15.) Indeed, it would rather seem strange if Paul never revisited Athens, to look after the little band of believers he left there.

His spirit was stirred in him—literally, *was sharpened*. *A sharp edge, as it were, was set on his spirit*. He was aroused into such ardor and zeal against the heathen darkness and perversity which prevailed at Athens, that he went not only into the Jewish synagogue and into private places, but even into the market places, and discoursed upon the principles of religion. (Ver. 17.) Paul's soul was filled with various emotions. To say that he was angry, provoked, or indignant, expresses too strongly one side of his feelings. There was also great pity and sorrow, and an eager zeal to do something for the salvation of the people. **When he saw the city wholly given to idolatry**—rather, *When he saw the city full of idols*. Athens was the center of Grecian worship, full of temples and altars. Outward show and ritualistic worship flourished alongside of philosophical and scholastic wisdom and culture. Pausanias says, "It had more images than all the rest of Greece;"

17 idolatry. Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily

18 with them that met with him. Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoics, encountered him. And

Petronius, satirically, that "it was easier to find a god than a man there;" and Livy, that it "was full of images of gods and men, adorned with every variety of material, and with all the skill of art."

17. Therefore--acting upon the impulses of his spirit and in the exercise of his earnest zeal, Paul *disputed*, rather, *reasoned* and *discussed*, in a conversational way (see on ver. 2), in the synagogue **with the Jews** and with **devout persons**, the Gentiles *worshipping* in the synagogue, whether full proselytes or not. (See on ver. 4.) And departing from his custom of first exclusively addressing Jews and devout Gentiles, or Jews first, and on being rejected by them, to turn to the Gentiles, he went daily into the **market place**, or *Agora*, which, in every Greek city, was a general place of meeting and discussion, and reasoned with the Athenians. The *market* was situated in a valley between four hills, the Acropolis, Mars Hill, the Pnyx, and the Museum. It was a beautiful square, set with trees, surrounded with statues, altars, buildings, porticoes, or colonades, among which were the famous "porches," where philosophers, poets and orators resorted and people of all ranks and classes met to hear and discuss the news. Here Socrates, more than four centuries before, carried on his wonderful conversational discussions. And now Paul adopts a similar method of reaching the people; conversing on the principles of natural and revealed religion with any who perchance *met with him* there. In this hand-to-hand conflict with heathenism, he adapted himself to the habits of the people, illustrating his saying, "I have become all things to all, that I may by all means save some." (1 Cor. 9 : 22.)

18. Luke relates the contact of Paul with two well-known classes of philosophers. Why he says nothing of the more illustrious schools, founded by Plato and Aristotle, has been variously explained: As having less influence at this time; taking less interest in practical discussions and less frequently

met in the market; and holding doctrines in smaller contrast with those of Christianity. Paul doubtless met with disciples of these schools, but Luke had no special reason to speak of them; while he had reason to speak of the Epicureans and Stoics in connection with Paul's memorable address. **Then**, etc.--rather, *And certain also of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers were discussing with him*. During this discussion such remarks as those that follow were made; and as a result Paul is taken to Mars Hill for an exposition of his views. *The Epicureans* owed their name to Epicurus, who established a school of philosophy at Athens in a garden, from which his followers were styled "philosophers of the garden." He died B. C. 270. He held the doctrine that serene enjoyment or pleasure is the chief good. He denied the creation and providential government of the world. While acknowledging the existence of gods, he described them as indifferent to human affairs. The soul he regarded as material, and with the body dissolving after death. Epicurus lived a life of great temperance and simplicity, but in Paul's time his philosophy had degenerated into a gross sensualism, and might be embodied in the sentence, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." (1 Cor. 15 : 32.) *The Stoics* were founded by Zeno, who was born in Cyprus, but established a school at Athens, and was a contemporary of Epicurus. He taught in a painted *Stoa*, or porch, which gave the name *Stoic* to the sect. The Stoics were pantheists, holding that God is the soul of the world, and that matter and deity are inseparable. Their highest good they held to be in insensibility to both pleasure and pain. They extolled virtue, aimed at a proud self-denial, an austere indifference to joy and sorrow, and urged men to become masters of circumstances. They condemned the use of images and temples, but in practice justified the polytheism of the age, considering the various gods as developments of the universal world-god.

some said, What will this babbler say? Other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection.

19 And they took him, and brought him unto ^aAreopagus, saying, May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is? For thou bringest certain

^a ver. 22.

They were fatalists; and providence was but an iron destiny, to which even God was subject. The Epicurean philosophy was rather a favorite with the Greeks; the Stoic with the Romans. "In Epicureanism it was man's sensual nature which arrayed itself against the gospel; in Stoicism it was self-righteousness and pride of intellect; and it is difficult to say which of the two systems rendered its votaries the more indisposed to embrace the truth." (HACKETT.) The difference of these two schools perhaps manifests itself somewhat in the two estimates put upon Paul. The frivolous spirit of the Epicurean might lead him to ask, **What will this babbler say?** literally, *this seed-picker*; one who gathers up and retails scraps of knowledge without judgment; hence *this empty talker*. But some of the more thoughtful Stoics might think him to be a **setter forth of strange gods**—*divinities foreign* and unknown to them. This was the charge upon which Socrates was tried and condemned. Paul was misjudged, **because he announced the glad tidings of Jesus and the resurrection**. Some suppose they thought that Paul was announcing the Resurrection as a god. But Paul could hardly have been so obscure in his language as to give such an impression to his hearers. He doubtless spoke of the true God, and of Jesus as the Son of God. (Ver. 24 31.) In referring to the resurrection of Jesus some of his hearers may have rightly inferred his divinity from that event. The true God and his Son Jesus Christ were new and strange to them.

19. **And they took him**—*taking hold of him*, not violently, but in a friendly manner, such as taking him by the hand. So Barnabas took hold of Saul of Tarsus and brought him to the apostles (see 9: 27), where the same verb is used. The supposition that he was arrested (16: 19), even in mockery, is against the general spirit of the nar-

ative. For we have the courteous wish and the polite request in this and the next verse. Then ver. 21 indicates that it was curiosity that occasioned their desire to hear Paul. Moreover, Paul's address is not a defence, and finally he departs without molestation, or the least sign of any judicial process. **And brought him unto Areopagus**, or *upon the top of the Hill of Mars*. The word is the same as that translated Mars' Hill in ver. 22. (See on ver. 16.) This was the name of the hill as well as of the highest court of ancient Athens which held its sittings there. The hill took its name from Mars, the god of war, who according to a tradition was brought to trial there by the gods for murder. It is a ridge of limestone rock about fifty or sixty feet above the valley below. The meetings were held on the southeastern summit of the rock. There are still sixteen stone steps, cut in the rock, leading up to the hilltop, from the valley of the Agora or Market below. Immediately above the steps, on the level of the hill, are benches of stone, forming three sides of a quadrangle, facing the south. Here the Areopagites, composed of the most distinguished men of Athens, were accustomed to sit as judges in the open air. The philosophers who conducted Paul to this famous spot probably took their seats on the stone benches while the multitude stood upon the steps and in the valley below. **May we know**—a very courteous request, characteristic of Athenian politeness. **What this new doctrine**, or *teaching is, of which thou talkest in the market?* They wish to know the principles, sentiments, and truths taught by him; and the word *teaching* is used here in this general sense.

20. **For thou bringest strange**—*surprising or startling things to our ears*. This states their reason for asking the preceding question, and for expressing the wish that follows. **We**

^bstrange things to our ears: we would know therefore what these things mean.
 21 For all the Athenians and strangers which were there ^cspent their time in

nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing.

22 Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' Hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I per-

^b Hosea 8 : 12.

^c 2 Tim. 2 : 16, 17.

would know therefore what these things mean—*what they may be*, assuming that there was something in Paul's teaching worthy to be heard and considered by them. (See 2 : 12.) This is not to be taken as ironical in the mouths of these self-righteous and self-conceited philosophers, but rather as a courteous and complimentary method of address.

21. Luke explains the readiness and even eagerness of the Athenians to hear concerning this *new teaching* and these *startling things*. (Ver. 19, 20.) His statement agrees with the known character of the Athenians at this period of their history. **Now all Athenians** (omitting the article). The expression is strong, pointing to a universal characteristic of the Athenians. **And strangers which were there—sojourning there**. The nobility and wealthy of Italy and of most other countries sent their sons to Athens for purposes of education, and many others resorted thither for study. **Spent their time, or leisure, in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing**—literally, *something newer*, the latest news. "New things were ever losing their interest; newer things were sought for." (BEN-GEL.) This is in harmony with the testimony of ancient writers. "Demosthenes rebukes this insatiable craving of the Athenians after news in the following terms: 'Tell me whether going up and down the market place and asking each other, 'Is there any news,' is the business of your life.'" (HOWSON AND SPENCE.)

22. THE ADDRESS. In this speech Paul shows his wonderful power as an orator, in skillfully adapting himself to his audience. To the heathen he becomes as a heathen. The Scriptures, the long-expected Messiah, and the true God are unknown to them. Before he can announce Jesus to them he must present a true conception of God. And this he does by starting with facts

and truths which they themselves acknowledge. The nature and attributes of God as an all-sufficient Creator of the world, the Preserver of creatures and Governor of mankind, are inconsistent with idolatry. Having thus introduced to them the true God, he preached repentance, the judgment, Jesus (whom he does not yet name), and the resurrection. He is interrupted. We probably have but the outlines of his address. His adroitness, and his conciliatory tone held the ears of the Athenians until he announced to them the gospel, which he was about to unfold more fully. The wonder is not that he was interrupted so soon but, as Dr. Hackett remarks, "that he could command their attention so long while he bore down with such effect on their favorite opinions and prejudices, exposed their error, and arraigned them as guilty of the grossest inconsistency, and absurdity of conduct." The report of this speech and of the result that followed was probably written by Paul himself.

And Paul standing in the midst, of Mars' Hill—in the open air. (See on ver. 19.) The phrase *in the midst*, etc., could mean either the place, or the court of the Areopagus. That he was taken upon the hill seems evident from ver. 19. That some of the Areopagites were present may be inferred from ver. 34. Here in the midst of the rocky platform, with his audience seated on the stone benches of the judges and standing on the steps and in the vacant spaces around him, Paul stands the representative and proclaimer of the religion of the future. Here in the centre of Athens, with its statues, altars, and temples around him he could well say, the city was "full of idols," and sound the knell of the dying religions of the past. **Ye men of Athens, or Athenian men**; a common form of honorable address, used by Demosthenes and other orators in Athens. **Too superstitious**—liter-

ceive that in all things ye are ^d too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your ^e devotions, I found an altar with

this inscription, To THE UNKNOWN GOD. ²⁴ Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. ^f God that made

^d Jer. 50 : 38.

^e 2 Thess. 2 : 4.

^f ch. 14 : 15.

ally, more divinity-fearing, or demon-fearing than the rest of the Greeks. The word is used in a good sense, according to Paul's manner of beginning with gentle words, when he was about to blame. He would first secure the attention and good-will of his audience. The word may be fully translated, *more reverential to the gods, or very religious*. The Improved Bible Union version translates, *that ye are very much given to the worship of divinities*. This accords with the testimony of ancient writers. Thus Josephus says that the Athenians were the most religious of the Greeks (*Against Apion*). Xenophon relates that in comparison with other peoples they observed twice the number of festivals; and Sophocles speaks of their surpassing all the world in the honor they offered to the gods. Paul thus in an incidental and masterly way notices a distinction of which they were naturally proud.

23. For as I passed by, etc.—*for passing through your city and closely observing (not your devotions but) your objects of worship, such as altars, statues, temples, etc., I found an altar with this inscription, To the Unknown God.* Paul appeals to fact. It is certain from this passage that there was at least one such altar at Athens. And there may have been more. Pausanias, who wrote before A. D. 180, and Philostratus, who wrote A. D. 244, both speak of "altars of unknown gods" existing at Athens, probably meaning that there were several altars inscribed to an *unknown god*, a natural use of the plural when applied to them collectively. And Diogenes Laertius speaks of "altars without name" in Athens. He accounts for them in this way: "When the Athenians, at one time, were suffering from pestilence, Epimenides purified the city, and restrained the plague thus: he took sheep of black and white fleeces, led them to the Areopagus, and allowed them to go from it whitherso-

ever they pleased; instructing those who followed them to sacrifice each sheep wherever it lay down, to the proper god: and thus the plague ceased. Accordingly, from that time, and to-day, it is certain that altars without a name are found throughout the Athenian districts." Also there were in Phalerum, one of the harbors of Athens, "altars of gods called unknown and of heroes." (Quoted from BENDEL.) The real origin of such altars is most naturally traced to that feeling of uncertainty, that unsatisfied desire, and that conscious feeling of ignorance of divine realities, which were characteristic of heathenism. The Athenians, that they might neglect no divinity, erected altars, not only to all the heathen gods known among them, but also to any one that perhaps might be unknown to them. **Whom therefore, etc.** According to the latest critical authorities this should read, *What therefore ye worship unknowingly, that I declare unto you*. Notice how Paul uses a word similar to the inscription on their altar. *What ye worship*, some unknown divine power, thus not referring directly to Jehovah. It was some abstract and undefined Being or Power that they thus worshipped, and under this indefinite designation he would make known to them the living and true God. Jehovah was *unknown* to them, although their *unknown* was not Jehovah. Yet their altar was a confession of their ignorance of him.

24. Paul at once presents God as the Creator of the universe and different from the false gods of the heathen. His audience, especially the Stoics, would admit the existence of a Supreme Being, and he endeavors to lead them into a proper conception of him by way of contrast. He is unlike their gods, "not dwelling in temples made with hands," and this he argues from the fact that he is **Lord of heaven and earth**. He is an active, intelligent being, presiding over his works, and

the world and all things therein, seeing that he is ^a Lord of heaven and earth, ^b dwelleth not in temples made with hands; ^c neither is worshipped with men's hands, ^d as though he needed any thing, seeing

^e he giveth to all life, and breath, and all 26 things; and ^f hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, ^g and hath determined the times before appointed, and the

^g Matt. 11 : 25. ^b ch. 7 : 48; 1 Kings 8 : 27. ⁱ Job 22 : 2. ^k Num. 16 : 22; Job 12 : 10; Isa. 42 : 5. Zech. 12 : 1. ^l Gen. 3 : 20; Mat. 2 : 10. ^m Deut. 32 : 7, 8; Job 14 : 5.

thus not the idle being of the Epicureans in human form, nor the mere soul of the world, as the Stoics taught. Notice how he falls into the phraseology of the Old Testament. **God that made the world**, etc. (See Isa. 42 : 5.) Stier's remark is pertinent here : "Only on the firm foundation of the Old Testament doctrine of Creation can we rightly build the New Testament doctrine of Redemption." Thus Paul rightly begins at the foundation and first announces the one only God as Creator, before he preaches Christ as the Redeemer. In the words **dwelleth not in temples made with hands** there seems to be a reminiscence of Stephen's words, which Paul heard himself. (7 : 47, 48, 58.) God's spirituality is implied, but brought out more fully in ver. 30.

25. Paul further presents God as independent of all his creatures, self-sufficient and the Bestower of life and all things. **Neither is worshipped**, etc.—rather, *Neither is ministered to by men's hands*, or, according to many manuscripts, *by human hands*. Here there is another point of contrast. The heathen brought offerings of food and drink to their gods, under the superstitious belief that they consumed them, and other costly gifts, which services they regarded as meritorious and laying the gods under obligation to them. But Paul argues that the Lord of all, the Giver of life to all and of breath and of all things needed for the support and preservation of his creatures, cannot be dependent on them. Instead of our ministering to the necessities of God, he ministers to our necessities. The fact that all things come from him makes it evident that we can really give nothing to him. (1 Chron. 29 : 14.)

26. Paul asserts the unity of the race, God the Maker of all mankind, and his providential government over men. **And hath made of one**

blood all nations of men—or, *And made of one every nation of men*, blood not being found in many of the oldest manuscripts, and omitted by the majority of the latest critics. Meyer, however, would retain the word, believing that it was inadvertently dropped by copyists. The clause may also be rendered, *And has caused every nation* (sprung) *from one blood to dwell*, etc. The former, however, is the more general rendering and seems to be much preferable, as the more natural and simpler construction. In the omission of *blood* some see a reference to the divine origin of men, being the offspring of God (ver. 28), but Paul had not reached that thought in his discourse. The idea is that the race descended from one parent, whether we read, *made of one blood*, or simply, *made of one*. This ran counter to the views of heathenism, and the pride of the Athenians, who held that the nations had each their own origin, and each under the protection of some deity. They were proud of their race, as sprung from the soil of Attica, and different from other people. The belief that all sprang from one common parent would tend to correct the idea of many gods, and aid in accepting the truth of one God. (See 1 Kings 20 : 23, 28.) **To dwell**—that they should *settle on all the face of the earth*. God has given to the different nations their abode. (Deut. 32 : 8; Ps. 115 : 16.) **And hath determined the times before appointed**, rather, according to the most approved reading, *And hath determined their appointed times, or seasons, and the bounds of their habitation*. The providential government of God is here asserted. God has fixed the appointed eras in the life of nations, both as to their prosperity and their continuance, and prescribed the extent of their territory. The Athenians are thus reminded that to God they owe their favored abode

27 bounds of their habitation; ⁿ that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, ^o though he be

28 not far from every one of us. For in him we live, and move, and have our being; ^q as certain also of your own poets

^a ch. 15 : 17, ^o ch. 14 : 17; Ps. 139 : 1-13; Jer. 23 : 23, 24. ^p Job 12 : 10; Ps. 36 : 9; 66 : 9; Heb. 1 : 3. ^q Titus 1 : 12.

and the glories of their history—a warning to their pride and an incentive to their gratitude. (1 Cor. 4 : 7.) This doctrine of God's providence was opposed to Stoic fate and Epicurean chance.

Paul's reference to the unity of the race coincides with his teachings in his Epistles. (Rom. 5 : 12-15; 1 Cor. 15 : 21, 45; 1 Tim. 2 : 13.) This question transcends profane history, and aside from the Scriptures cannot be absolutely settled. But Comparative Philology and Comparative Physiology tend to confirm the history and doctrine in the Sacred Record.

27. The design of this providential goodness of God is, **That they should seek the Lord**—rather, *seek God*, according to the most approved text. (See Rom. 2 : 4.) "The great thought of the passage is simply: God the *Author*, the *Governor* and the *End* of the world's history, *from God, through God, to God.*" (MEYER.) **If haply**—implying possibility, but not very likely to happen. **If possibly they might feel after him**, that they *might grope after him* as in the dark, seeking after tokens and indications of God, and thus actually **find him**, attaining a knowledge of him and of their obligation to him. We have here a vivid picture of the heathen world without a written revelation, with light enough to point them up to God, and to render them without excuse. (See on 10 : 34, 35; Rom. 1 : 18-21.) **Though indeed he is not far from every one of us**—that is, he is very near to us, and, therefore, it should not be hard to find him. In not having found him, the spiritual blindness, darkness, and ignorance of heathenism are strongly implied. The omnipresence of God is also brought to view.

28. This nearness of God to us Paul further explains. It is not merely external, but it permeates our whole being, and is connected with our whole existence. **For in him we live and**

move and have our being, or *exist*. Our existence, our activities and all the powers in continuing to live, are dependent on God, and are to be traced to God as the source and the very atmosphere of our being. We are surrounded and sustained by the Omnipresent God. (See Eph. 1 : 10; Col. 1 : 17; Heb. 1 : 3.) It is not far, therefore, to seek and find him. (Ver. 27.) Pantheism makes God all, and all God; but Paul presents God who is over, above and outside of all his creatures, and upon whom all are dependent. This great truth, Paul reminds his auditors, is an acknowledged one, and accords with the utterances of their own writers: **As certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring**. Notice that while to a Jewish audience Paul would quote the Old Testament (13 : 16-23), he here quotes from heathen poets, an authority which his heathen hearers would likely accept. The quotation is found in two poets. Aratus, who lived about B. C. 270, a native of Cilicia, Paul's native province, and perhaps of Tarsus, says in one of his two poems that have come down to us: "For we, too, are his offspring." Cleanthes, who lived about B. C. 300, a native of Assos in Troas, uses substantially the same words in a hymn to Jupiter. Philosophers, like Plato and Plutarch, had also recognized the same truth. Paul elsewhere quotes from Menander (1 Cor. 15 : 38), and from Epimenides. (Titus 1 : 12.) Too much, however, must not be inferred from these regarding Paul's Greek learning and acquaintance with Greek literature. These quotations may have been used as proverbial sayings. Yet it must be remembered that Tarsus ranked with Athens and Alexandria as centres of Greek thought and knowledge. It was the place of illustrious teachers, among whom the Stoics were prominent, and Aratus, whom Paul quotes, represented the Stoic school of philosophy. In early life Paul was brought

have said. For we are also his offspring. 29 Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or

stone, graven by art and man's device. 30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all 31 men every where to repent: because he

† Ps. 115 : 4-8; Isa. 46 : 5-7; Hab. 2 : 19, 20.

* ch. 14 : 16; Rom. 3 : 25.

† Luke 24 : 47.

in contact with these Grecian influences, and doubtless at school read somewhat from Greek books. After his conversion, while residing a few years at Tarsus (9 : 30; 11 : 25), looking forward to more extended Gentile work, he very likely gave attention to those things which he would meet among Gentiles, and may have extended his reading among Greek authors. Then, if not before, he may have read Aratus, who was very popular, especially in Cilicia.

29. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God—starting then with this truth which all would acknowledge, he turns his argument against idolatry. And how skillfully he does it. That he may not repel his hearers he classes himself among them, using the *first* person plural. Thus to those not under law he became as one not under law. (1 Cor. 9 : 20.) **We ought not to think that the Godhead, or the Deity, who is our Author and Parent, is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven or carved by art and man's device, the thoughts and ingenuity of man.** Man is not like gold, etc.; much less is God. To suppose this of God is to degrade ourselves, the offspring of God. Compare the similar argument against idolatry in Ps. 115 : 8 and Isa. 46 : 5-7. The same argument applies against the Romish use of images to bring God near the soul through the imagination. God is a spirit, and his relationship to us is principally spiritual; and spirit cannot be pictured forth in matter. (John 4 : 21-24.) "This is equally true of art representations of Christ, since what is adorable in him is not the fleshly form (2 Cor. 5 : 16), but the inward impalpable spirit." (ABBOTT.)

30. Paul's address implied that the heathen were in a state of spiritual ignorance and degradation. He now turns to salvation and the claims of the gospel. **And the times of this ignorance**—strange and bold lan-

guage to a people who prided themselves in wisdom. Yet the Athenians had confessed it in that inscription on the altar. The world by wisdom knew not God. (1 Cor. 1 : 21.) **God winked at**—an incorrect translation; rather, *God therefore having overlooked.* The idea is similar to that in 14 : 16, "Who in ages past, suffered all nations to walk in their own ways." God had foreborne with the heathen. While withholding special revelations and special messengers, as to the Jewish people, he had also withheld deserved punishment. (Rom. 3 : 25.) He left them to the light of nature and the promptings of their own consciences; and with what terrible results are described in Rom. 1 : 24, 25. While it is true, as Alford says, that in the word *overlooked*, there may "lie treasures of mercy for those who lived in the times of ignorance," especially such as Cornelius, who were devoutly seeking after God (10 : 34, 35), yet the word does not mean, as Hackett remarks, "that God would not judge or punish the heathen for the sins committed in their state of idolatry," which "would be at variance with Paul's theology on the subject as he has unfolded it in Rom. 1 : 20; 2 : 11, f." **But now**—those times of forbearance are past, and God by his revelations and his messengers, of whom Paul himself was one, **commandeth all men everywhere to repent**, to turn to him from their evil practices, with change of heart and reformation of life. Compare the same truth less positively stated in 11 : 18. It is implied that punishment will not longer be withheld, and that the violation of the command will not be without its penalty.

31. Inasmuch as he hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness—a reason why all should repent. Paul's reference to the judgment was apt and solemn on Mars' Hill, where the Areopagus held its sessions, and judicial sentences were announced.

hath appointed a day, in the which ³² he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all men, in that ³² he hath raised him from the dead. And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others

said, We will hear thee again of this ³³ matter. So Paul departed from among ³⁴ them. Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which *was* Dionysius, the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

³² ch. 10 : 42; Matt. 25 : 31-46; John 5 : 22, 23; Rom. 2 : 16; 14 : 10; 2 Cor. 5 : 10. ³³ ch. 2 : 24; 1 Peter 1 : 3. ³⁴ ver. 19.

Notice how imbued was Paul's mind with God's word, in that he uses the language of Ps. 9 : 9, "He shall judge the world in righteousness." Righteousness will be, as it were, the moral element in which the judgment will take place. **By that man whom he hath ordained**—literally, *In a man*, that is, in the person of the man *whom he appointed* for that purpose, unknown to them, but whom he is about to make known. *Man* is made emphatic and definite by the clause that follows. Concerning the man Christ Jesus, as judge, see on 10:42; John 5:23-29. Paul says nothing of his divine nature, for that might have been misunderstood by his Athenian audience, who might conceive him to be a deified Jewish hero. **Whereof he hath given assurance**—the evidence and ground of faith to **all by raising him from the dead**. The resurrection is made the proof of his divine office and of his claims upon all men. (See Rom. 1:4.) All men therefore should believe and obey. This was evidently not designed as the conclusion of Paul's address; but his discourse is here interrupted, and abruptly brought to a close. What further he intended to say can only be a matter of conjecture. Perhaps he would have developed the doctrine of a general resurrection and a general judgment. Probably he would have introduced Jesus more fully to his audience, as the Author of eternal life and the Saviour of men.

32. Paul had not mentioned the name Jesus, and had pushed off toward the end of his address the idea of a resurrection, which he knew would be offensive to his philosophical hearers. So in his address to the Jews (21:21) he pushes the word Gentile toward the close. **The resurrection.** Paul had spoken of the resurrection of Jesus, but his hearers naturally infer that he

held to the doctrine of the resurrection of all men. **Some mocked**—interrupting him with loud, deriding, jesting words. The doctrine of a resurrection from the dead was regarded by the Greeks as grossly absurd. **Others**, more polite, and perhaps of a more serious turn of mind, **said, We will hear thee concerning this yet again.** Had not Paul been interrupted by the mockers, they would have listened further, but under the circumstances they conclude to defer consideration until another interview, which probably never occurred. Perhaps some of the gay Epicureans were the leaders of the former, and some of the graver Stoics of the latter. (See 21:25.)

33. So—thus derided by some and treated with indifference by others, **Paul went out from among them.** The manner of his going forth indicates that he was neither under trial, nor under any personal restraint whatever. He appears to have aroused neither special opposition nor special interest.

34. Howbeit—rather, *But*, contrasting the apparently fruitless effort on Mars' Hill with the more favorable results of his brief labors at Athens. **Certain men clave unto him**—*joined themselves to him*; becoming associated with him, **believed** in the doctrine preached and in Jesus Christ. This involved much sacrifice amid the mockery, pride, and worldly wisdom of the people. One of the converts was **Dionysius**, an eminent citizen of Athens, since he was an **Areopagite**, one of the judges of the Areopagus, that most august tribunal of ancient Greece. Paul would very naturally select him to look after the little company of believers, who may also have chosen him as pastor. There is a tradition to that effect; also that he suffered martyrdom. The writings attributed to him are spurious, and of later date. **And a woman**

named **Damaris**—nothing more is known of her. The fact that she is named may indicate her as prominent, influential, or well known. The way she is mentioned in the original is against the supposition of some, that she was the wife of Dionysius.

It is common to speak of Paul's ministry at Athens as a failure. But was it a failure? It is true that he found fields for longer and more successful labor in the commercial cities of Thessalonica and Corinth. But surely the gathering of a small company of converts, some of them eminent, during his brief tarrying at Athens, was in no sense a failure. The little church gathered there in this, and perhaps a subsequent visit, continued, and afforded in the second and third centuries martyrs and defenders of Christianity. His influence continued, and became inseparably connected with Athens. No one visits that city without thinking of Paul; the influence of his address is world-wide. The accomplished Longinus, born in the third century at Athens, not a Christian, but a teacher of the Platonic philosophy, uses this remarkable language in a fragment of one of his critical treatises: "The crowning flower of Hellenic genius and eloquence is to be found in Demosthenes, Lysias, Aeschines, Aristides, Zimarchus, Isocrates, Xenophon—to these I would add Paul of Tarsus." This would indicate that the discourse of Paul had become one of the traditions of Athenian eloquence, and that Longinus regarded him as worthy to stand with the great masters of the Bema.

In the ancient world were two distinct civilizations, one the result of human philosophy, the other of a divine revelation; the former having its chief centre at Athens, the latter at Jerusalem. This one, elevated above idolatry, presented a purity of morality unequalled in the ancient world; that one, debased in views of God and practices of worship, presented amid refinement of philosophy, poetry and art, a beastly immorality in social and private life. The leaders at Jerusalem prided themselves in their own righteousness; the leaders at Athens in their wisdom. Paul met them both, and with little

success. The preaching of Christ to the former was "a stumbling-block;" to the latter, "foolishness." But to multitudes of others, connected with the Jewish and Gentile world, who heard with attention and believed, "Christ became the power of God and the wisdom of God." (1 Cor. 1: 21-24.)

PRACTICAL REMARKS.

1. Opposition to the truth in one place should not deter the servant of God from proclaiming it in other places. (Ver. 1, 10, 15; 1 Thess. 2: 1, 2.)

2. The Scriptures contain in themselves the proofs of Christianity. (Ver. 2; Gen. 49: 10; Isa. 11: 1, 10; Dan. 9: 24-27; Micah 5: 2.)

3. The sufferings and resurrection of Christ are essential to gospel preaching. (Ver. 3; Isa. 53: 1-12; 1 Cor. 15: 13, 14.)

4. "Grace does not give the preference to persons in high stations, but neither does it repel them." (STARKER.) (Ver. 4; 1 Cor. 1: 26-28.)

5. Hatred of the gospel, and envy at its success, begets prejudice, lawlessness, and vile opposition. (Ver. 5, 13; 14: 2-6.)

6. The gospel is subversive. It turns the world right side up, because it is upside down. (Ver. 6; Hag. 2: 7; Mal. 4: 6; Luke 1-17.)

7. Christ is a King, but his kingdom is not of this world. There should be no friction between him and Caesar. (Ver. 7; Matt. 22: 21; Rom. 13: 1, f.)

8. The gospel is a troubler of the hearts and lives of wicked men. (Ver. 8; Matt. 2: 3; John 16: 8.)

9. Wicked men often wish to take pledges of the gospel, but are unwilling to give pledges to the gospel. (Ver. 9; John 6: 30; 5: 40.)

10. We may change places of Christian labor, but we shall find conflict with evil wherever we are. (Ver. 1, 10; 20: 23.)

11. To seek to know the truth, whether it accords with previous opinions or not, is a mark of true nobleness of mind. God's word is the standard for both preachers and churches. (Ver. 11; Isa. 8: 20.)

12. The Scriptures, honestly investigated, lead to Christ. (Ver. 11, 12; John 5: 39; Rom. 15: 4.)

13. Women were specially useful in the

Macedonian churches. (Ver. 4, 12; 16: 40; Phil. 4: 2, 3.)

14. The deep wickedness of the heart is often manifested, not only in rejecting Christ, but also in preventing others from receiving him. (Ver. 13; Luke 11: 52.)

15. The perseverance of Paul as a preacher is worthy of imitation. (Ver. 14, 15; 26: 20; Rom. 15: 18, 19.)

16. Amid the wealth and splendor of the city, the large amount of degradation and spiritual desolation should arouse Christian zeal and activity. (Ver. 16, 17; 1 Thess. 2: 9-12.)

17. In order to the highest success we should bear the gospel to the very homes and marts of men. (Ver. 17; 20: 20; Luke 14: 23.)

18. Culture, formalism, and ritualism often go together. (Ver. 16-18; Luke 18: 11, 12.)

19. Human philosophy without true religion is darkness and folly. (Ver. 18, 32; Rom. 1: 22; 1 Tim. 6: 20.)

20. Intellectual pride and self-righteousness are ever opposed to Christ and the gospel. (Ver. 17, 18.)

21. If curiosity seeks only amusement and novelty, it is most hurtful; but if it is turned toward truth, instruction, and a new heart, it yields most happy results. (Ver. 19-21; Luke 23: 8; John 12: 21.)

22. While holding fast to the truths of the gospel, the preacher should adapt himself and his words to his hearers. (Ver. 22; Prov. 11: 30.)

23. Through forty centuries the world by its wisdom failed to discover the true God. (Ver. 23; 1 Cor. 1: 21; 1 John 5: 19.)

24. God is a supreme and omnipresent Sovereign. (Ver. 24; Isa. 45: 18; 57: 15.)

25. God is independent and has all sufficiency in himself. (Ver. 25; Ps. 50: 1, 7-15.)

26. "The unity of the human race is a first truth both of revelation and of the gospel system. It accounts for their oneness of character, for their common need of a Saviour, and their common relations to him. In it is the foundation of society, and the source of all equal and reciprocal rights between individuals and nations." (I. P. WARREN.) (Ver. 26; Rom. 5: 12.)

27. The great object and end of life is to seek and know God. (Ver. 27; John 17: 3; Phil. 3: 8-11.)

28. God alone is self-existent. All life is from him and through him. (Ver. 28.)

29. God is spiritual in his essence and nature, with which all forms of idolatry are inconsistent. (Ver. 29; John 4: 24; Isa. 40: 25-28.)

30. The coming of Christ was the turning point in the history of our race. (Ver. 30; Gal. 4: 4; Heb. 1: 1, 2.)

31. To know that all men everywhere may and can repent is indeed glad tidings to a guilty world. (Ver. 30; Mark 1: 14, 15.)

32. The resurrection of Christ makes certain a future judgment. (Ver. 31; 2 Cor. 4: 10; Rom. 2: 6-11.)

33. Rejecters of the gospel are mostly of two classes, mockers and postponers. There is a point when the preacher can well desist from further effort for the salvation of his hearers. (Ver. 32, 33; John 8: 21; 12: 36-40.)

34. God's word does not return to him void. The preacher labors not in vain. (Ver. 34; Isa. 55: 11; 1 Cor. 15: 58.)

Ch. 18: Continuing his second missionary tour, Paul leaves Athens and goes to Corinth, where he labors for eighteen months or more, and then returns to Antioch in Syria, by way of Ephesus and Jerusalem. After a brief visit at Antioch, Paul commences his third missionary tour by revisiting Galatia and Phrygia.

1-17. **PAUL AT CORINTH. HIS ARRANGEMENT BEFORE GALLIO.** (1 Cor. 1: 1, 14, 16; 2: 2, 3; 4: 11, 12; 2 Cor. 1: 19; 11: 8, 9; 1 Thess. 3: 6, 7; Isa. 43: 5; Jer. 1: 8.) Paul's stay at Athens appears to have been brief, and his arrival at Corinth occurred probably about the first of August, A. D. 52. His stay there, perhaps including a second visit to Athens (see on ver. 18), probably continued about two years. (Compare note on § 34 *Harmonic Arrangement of the Acts.*)

1. **After these things**—related in the preceding chapter. Paul should be omitted according to the best authorities, showing a close connection between this and the last chapter. Literally, *He being parted from Athens*, having taken his departure apparently with some reluctance, there being perhaps no special opportunity for present labor, possibly no work to do at his trade (ver. 3), and Silas and Timothy

Paul at Corinth; and his return, by Ephesus, Cæsarea, and Jerusalem, to Antioch.

18 AFTER these things Paul departed from 2 Athens, and came to * Corinth. And [he]

found a certain Jew named * Aquila, born in ^b Pontus, lately come from Italy with his wife Priscilla; (because that ° Claudius had commanded all Jews to

* 1 Cor. 1 : 2.

* Rom. 16 : 3, 4; 1 Cor. 16 : 19; 2 Tim. 4 : 19.

^b ch. 2 : 9.

° ch. 11 : 28.

not having come. (Ver. 6.) **To Corinth**—a distance of about forty-five miles. The voyage by sea can be made by fair winds in four or five hours. Corinth was situated on the Isthmus, from three and a half to ten miles wide, which united the peninsula of Peloponnesus to the mainland of Greece. It was built on the north of a rocky mount, which rose abruptly about two thousand feet above the level of the sea, and served as a citadel, called *Aerocorinthus*. From its top the hills about Athens and the Acropolis could be seen. The city had two harbors: the eastern at Cenchrea (ver. 18) on the Saronic Gulf, now called the Gulf of Egina, where Paul landed; the western at Lechæum, on the Corinthian Gulf, now the Gulf of Patras and Lepanto. The city was destroyed by the Romans under Lucius Mummius, B. C. 146, and the place remained desolate for a century; but in B. C. 46 it was rebuilt and made a colony (16:12) by Julius Cæsar. It was also made the capital of the Roman province of Achaia, and the residence of the Proconsul. It again became prosperous, wealthy, and extremely licentious. It was the commercial metropolis of Greece, where also the arts and literature were cultivated. Vice, too, was displayed without shame. So lax were the morals at Corinth, that to *Corinthianize* was synonymous with profligate indulgence. The site is now only marked with a few ruins, and a small malarious town, called Gortho. Its advantages for trade had attracted a large population of Jews. It thus afforded a most favorable place for the planting and the spreading of the gospel.

2. Paul entered Corinth a stranger, and perhaps penniless. He knew what it was to suffer "hunger and thirst." (2 Cor. 11 : 27.) But God provided for him lodging and the means of livelihood. **He found a certain Jew named Aquila.** Some infer that he was not

now a Christian, from the way he is here mentioned, as a Jew and not styled a disciple. Others suppose that he had embraced the gospel before leaving Rome, because nothing is here said of his conversion. If he was not a Christian, he soon became one; for considerable Christian growth is implied in ver. 26. He went with Paul to Ephesus (ver. 18, 19, 26), and was there when Paul wrote the First Epistle to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 16 : 19), and at Rome, when Paul wrote his Epistle to the Romans (Rom. 16 : 3), and again at Ephesus during Paul's second imprisonment. (2 Tim. 4 : 19.) **Born in Pontus**—the northeastern province in Asia Minor. (See on 2 : 9.) A coincidence has been noted in that Aquila who translated the Old Testament into Greek more literally than the Septuagint, living more than a half century later, was a Jew also born in Pontus. **Italy**—its ordinary application to the peninsula between the Alps and the Straits of Messina. (27 : 1, 6; Heb. 13 : 21.) **Claudius**—the fourth Roman emperor, from A. D. 41–54, a weak-minded and irresolute man, who could be easily used by designing and wicked men. His weak and foolish reign was ended through poisoning by his fourth wife Agrippina, the mother of Nero. (11 : 28.) **Had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome**—Suetonius confirms this statement, when he says (Claudius c. 25), "He expelled the Jews from Rome who were constantly making disturbance, being instigated by Chrestus." This may refer to some leader of that name at that time. But as *Christus* was frequently pronounced *Chrestus* by the pagans, it may refer to some tumult connected with the expectation of a Messiah; or some dispute about Christianity, or to some riot of the Jews against their Christian brethren, as at Thessalonica and other places. (17 : 5, 13.) Neander does not believe that this banishment of Jews from Rome had any "real connection with

depart from Rome:) and came unto them.
 3 And because he was of the same craft, he
 abode with them, ⁴ and wrought: for by
 their occupation they were tentmakers
 4 • And he reasoned in the synagogue every

sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the
 Greeks.

5 And [†]when Silas and Timotheus were
 come from Macedonia, Paul was [‡]pressed
 in the spirit, and testified to the Jews

4 ch. 20 : 34; 1 Cor. 4 : 12; 9 : 6-12; 1 Thess. 2 : 9; 2 Thess. 3 : 8, 9. • ch. 17 : 2, 3. † ch.
 17 : 14, 15. ‡ ch. 4 : 20; 17 : 16; Job 32 : 18; Jer. 20 : 9.

Christianity." (*Planting and Training*, p. 193.) Suetonius does not state the date of this expulsion. But Luke implies that it was **lately or recently**; and, with what we know of the reign of Claudius, it suits well with A. D. 52. Tacitus (*Annot.* xii. 52) records the expulsion of the astrologers, which occurred in A. D. 52, who were suspected of aiding conspirators against the life of Claudius by their astrology. But whether there was any connection between the two events is uncertain. The dread of political commotions may have been at the foundation of both, and the two may have been near together. The decree, however, did not remain long in force (28 : 15; Rom. 16 : 3); not longer than the reign of Claudius, who died A. D. 54. **Priscilla**—a diminutive of *Prisca*. (Rom. 16 : 3; 1 Cor. 16 : 19.) In the six times in which she and her husband are mentioned in the New Testament, her name stands first four times; from which we may infer that she was the stronger character of the two.

3. And because he was of the same craft, or trade, he abode with them and wrought. Every Jewish parent had his son learn some trade. The Jewish Rabbins were no exception to this rule. The great Hillel was a carpenter. So was Jesus. (Mark 6 : 3.) Paul labored for his own support not only here, but at Thessalonica (1 Thess. 2 : 9; 2 Thess. 3 : 8), and at Ephesus. (20 : 34.) **They were tentmakers.** There was a great demand for portable tents both for travelers and soldiers. They were made out of leather, linen, and goat-hair cloth. Paul probably used the latter, from the hair of the Cilician goat, which was common in that country. As he was a native of Cilicia, this may account for his having learned this trade. Humanly speaking, there was small encouragement to a humble tent-maker

to evangelize a proud, wealthy, and vicious city. (1 Cor. 4 : 12.) Paul deeply realized this, though exercising strong faith in God. "I was with you," he says, "in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling." (1 Cor. 2 : 3.)

"Tent-making constitutes an important occupation in Western Asia at the present day. In all the larger cities, and particularly at Constantinople, there is a portion of the bazar, or business part of the town, entirely devoted to this branch of industry. Here may be seen men engaged in cutting and sewing canvas, in constructing or finishing off tents of various forms and sizes, in mending and repairing those long used, or packing them up for their customers." (VAN-LENNEP, *Bible Lands*, p. 415.)

4. Paul, as was his custom, avails himself of the **synagogue** for preaching. (See on 13 : 5.) **Reasoned**—or *argued* with them. (17 : 2.) **Persuaded**—*sought to persuade* them to believe. **Greeks**—proselytes and other Gentiles who attended the synagogue.

5. It was while Paul was thus laboring in the synagogue that **Silas and Timothy** came from **Macedonia**, the northern province of Greece. (16 : 9.) This was probably not long after Paul's arrival at Corinth. He had left Silas and Timothy at Berea, had sent for them from Athens to come to him as soon as possible, and was waiting for them at Athens. (17 : 14-16.) The natural impression from the whole narrative is, that this was the coming which Paul had commanded and was waiting for; and that Silas and Timothy came together, though it is possible to understand the language to mean that they came one after the other about the same time. (See on 17 : 16.) **But when Silas and Timotheus were come**, etc. There seems to be some connection between their coming and

that Jesus was Christ [or, is the Christ].
 6 And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, ^bhe shook *his raiment*, and said unto them, ⁱYour blood be upon your own heads; ^kI am clean: from

^lhenceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.
 7 And he departed thence, and entered into a certain *man's house*, named ^mJustus, *one that worshipped God*, whose house 8 joined hard to the synagogue. ⁿAnd

^b ch. 13 : 51; Neh. 5 : 13.
 3 : 18, 19; 33 : 8, 9.

ⁱ 2 Sam. 1 : 16; Ezek. 18 : 13; 33 : 4.
^l ch. 13 : 46, 47; 28 : 28.

^k ch. 20 : 26, 27; Ezek.
^m Col. 4 : 11. ⁿ 1 Cor. 1 : 14.

the statement regarding Paul that follows. It gave him a new impulse. Instead of **the spirit**, the most approved reading is *the word*. He was engrossed, closely, or completely occupied with the word. Not that Silas and Timothy found Paul thus, but their coming was followed by this increased activity, and was in some way productive of it. (See 2 Cor. 2 : 13; 7 : 6.) Perhaps they brought gifts from the Macedonian churches which relieved Paul and allowed him to give himself more wholly to the work. (2 Cor. 11 : 9; 1 Thess. 3 : 6.) Besides, he had their co-operation and aid in preaching the gospel. (2 Cor. 1 : 19.) **Testified to the Jews**—making them the first offer of salvation as usual. (Rom. 1 : 16.) **That Jesus was—or is, the Christ**. Up to this time his discussions in the synagogue had been in a measure preliminary, pointing toward Jesus as the Christ, such as the office, nature, and work of the Messiah. Now he proves from the Scriptures and positively affirms that the Old Testament predictions are fulfilled in Jesus as the Christ, giving evidences of his resurrection and ascension; and he presses home upon their consciences their duty to accept him. (See 1 Cor. 2 : 2; 2 Cor. 1 : 19.)

6. Paul's earnestness aroused opposition. His experience was like that at Antioch in Pisidia. (13 : 45, 46.) **They opposed**—*they themselves resisting*, arraying themselves in concerted opposition. **Blasphemed**—ridiculed and maliciously reviled Paul's message. (1 Thess. 2 : 15, 16.) **He shook his raiment**—the very dust from his garments, as a witness and a protest against their conduct. (See on 13 : 51; Matt. 10 : 14.) **Your blood be upon your own heads**—the blame and consequences of your guilt rest upon you personally. You alone will be responsible for the destruction that awaits you. The expression was familiar to

the Jews. (See Ezek. 34 : 4; Matt. 27 : 25.) **I am clean**—guiltless, having discharged my duty, and you refuse to receive God's message of salvation. Some punctuate so as to read, *I shall henceforth go pure*, that is, blameless, with a pure conscience, *to the Gentiles*. (See on 13 : 46.) Paul felt under obligation to offer the gospel first to the Jew. (See Rom. 9 : 1-3; 10 : 1.) But further offers to these blaspheming Jews at Corinth would be like casting pearls before swine. (Matt. 7 : 6.)

7. Being opposed and interrupted by the Jews, so that he could not work to advantage, Paul **departed thence**, from the synagogue, and **entered into a certain man's house**, not merely for this once, but rather as a permanent meeting-place. God had work for him to do, and provided a place for him to do it. It is not implied that he changed his lodging. **Named Justus**. Some of the oldest manuscripts and versions read, *Titius Justus*. This was not the Titus of the Epistle and the companion of Paul, who already was a disciple, and two years before this had accompanied Paul from Antioch to Jerusalem to the Apostolic Conference. (Gal. 2 : 1; Acts 15 : 2.) **One who worshipped God**—not a Jew, nor yet a Christian, but a devout Gentile who had embraced the Jewish faith. He doubtless became a disciple. His house seems to have been of sufficient size for Paul's congregation. The court-yard could have been used for this purpose. **Whose house joined hard**—or *was adjoining the synagogue*—here, the building; in 13 : 42, the assembly. The house was convenient, being close to his former meeting-place. It thus served as a protest, a reminder, and an invitation, to all his former hearers.

8. This sudden departure of Paul from the synagogue brought matters to a crisis. **Crispus**, the Roman name

Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house. And many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.

9 Then ^ospake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, ^pBe not afraid, but 10 speak, and hold not thy peace: ^qfor I am

with thee, and ^rno man shall set on thee to hurt thee: ^sfor I have much people in this city.

11 And ^the continued *there* a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

^o ch. 16 : 9 ; 23 : 11. ^p Jer. 1 : 17 ; see 1 Cor. 2 : 3. ^q Josh. 1 : 5, 9 ; Jer. 1 : 18, 19 ; John 14 : 18-23. ^r Jer. 15 : 20 ; Luke 21 : 18. ^s ch. 15 : 14 ; John 10 : 16. ^t see 2 Cor. 12 : 12.

of the ruler of the synagogue (see on 13 : 15), believed on the Lord Jesus. Omit chief. From his office it may be inferred that he was a man of influence and learning. He was one of the few whom Paul baptized with his own hands. He also baptized there Gaius and the household of Stephanas. (1 Cor. 1 : 14-16.) Others were baptized probably by Silas and Timothy. With all his house. Another example of the conversion of an entire household. (16 : 15, 34.) Paley notices how the differences between Luke here and Paul in 1 Cor. 1 : 14-17 confirm the truthfulness of each other. If the Epistle had been written to suit the history, the names of Stephanas and Gaius would have been omitted, and if the history had been framed to suit the Epistle their names would have been added. Many of the Corinthians — Gentiles, native Greeks of Corinth, principally from the middle and lower classes. (1 Cor. 1 : 26.)

9. At this point there appears to have been some respite in the work. Jewish opposition was violent, and Paul probably begins to feel it best to seek another field of labor, perhaps to return toward Athens and thence into Macedonia. But the Lord speaks to him in the night by a vision—in some supernatural appearance, or possibly in a dream. (See on 9 : 10.) Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace. It is a fair inference that Paul, at this time, needed special direction and encouragement. (See 1 Cor. 2 : 3.) He may have been troubled with bodily weakness, "the thorn in the flesh" (2 Cor. 12 : 7), and the consequent depression of feelings. It must have been a comfort to Paul that the Lord addressed him, in this and the next verse, in the words spoken long before to Jeremiah (1 : 8), and to ancient Israel. (Isa. 43 : 5.)

10. No man shall set on thee to hurt thee—which proved true in his experience for eighteen months. (Ver. 11.) Some would translate, *So as to hurt thee*. The attempt of the Jews later proved an ignominious failure. (Ver. 12 : 17.) Immediately after the eighteen months Paul may have been absent from Corinth for a time. (See on ver. 11.) For I have much people in this city—prospectively. They were the true Israel who would yet believe; and already his chosen ones, and known to him as such. (13 : 48 ; Rom. 8 : 29.) Paul was being prepared to write his great Epistle to the Romans, a few years later.

11. He continued there—literally, *he sat down there*, that is, he sojourned, or dwelt there. The same verb is used in Luke 24 : 49 : "*Tarry ye* in the city of Jerusalem." It here suggests the restful state of Paul's mind after he had received the revelation from the Lord. He tarried in peace and quiet a year and six months, after which the disturbance occurred related in the next verses. A year and six months. Either the whole time of his residence at Corinth, or the time during which he was free from assault, previous to the event mentioned in the next verse. The former is the more common view; the latter is held by Meyer and some others. The latter is preferable, because: 1. It more exactly fulfills the promise of the Lord in ver. 10. 2. His teaching the word of God among them, that is, in the city of Corinth (ver. 10), rather implies that during this period he gave attention to this city work, and hence that after this he labored in other parts of Achaia. (2 Cor. 1 : 1 ; Rom. 16 : 1.) 3. It seems also more natural to regard the "*yet many days*" of ver. 18 as additional to "the year and six months" of ver. 11. 4. The year and six months

12 And when Gallio was the deputy of Achaia, the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought

13 him to the judgment seat, saying, This fellow persuadeth men to worship God

may be the entire time of Paul's first visit to Corinth, after which he goes to Achaia and revisits Athens, intending to go to Thessalonica, but is hindered, and sends Timothy in his place. (1 Thess. 2 : 18 ; 3 : 1.) Paul then returns to Corinth, making his second visit to that city. This would make his coming into Greece, recorded in 20 : 2, 3, his third visit, which accords with 2 Cor. 13 : 1 : "This is the third time I am coming to you." This affords a beautiful way of harmonizing several passages regarding Paul's intended visit to Thessalonica, and his third visit to Corinth. There is much to commend this view. (See *Harmonic Arrangement of Acts*, § 34.)

12. **And**—better, *But*, contrasting with the preceding quiet (ver. 11), and introducing something new and later. It is entirely consistent with Luke's brief and concise history to suppose several weeks, or even two or three months to have elapsed between this verse and the last. This would give abundant time for Paul's unfinished journey to Thessalonica by the way of Athens, and his return to Corinth, performing missionary labors in various places in Achaia. See preceding verse. Luke says nothing of this; and so he says nothing of Paul's visit to Arabia soon after his conversion (9 : 20-25; Gal. 1 : 17), and of many other things mentioned in the Epistles. Such a visit to Athens seems probable. It would be natural for Paul to desire to see the brethren there, and to carry forward the work which he had commenced, but so soon had left. (See on 17 : 34.)

When Gallio was deputy, or *pro-consul* of the province of Achaia. Under the two preceding emperors, Tiberius and Caligula, Achaia was an imperial province, and its governor was a *Proprætor*, but under the Emperor Claudius (Jan., A. D. 41–Oct., 54) it became a senatorial province, and its governor was a *Proconsul*. (See on 13 : 7.) This is another illustration of Luke's accuracy. *Gallio* was a brother of the celebrated Stoic moralist, Seneca, who

speaks of him as having resided in Achaia, but says nothing of his official position there. But Pliny refers to his *consulship*, and does not say where it was. He is represented as a cultivated and polished scholar, popular and beloved as a man. Seneca writes of him in terms of highest praise and affection : "My brother Gallio, whom every one loves too little, even he who loves him most." He probably had not been *Proconsul* long; and somewhat later he appears to have resigned on account of his health. He died A. D. 65. The Roman province of Achaia included all of Greece except Macedonia. **The Jews made insurrection**, etc.—rather, *rose up with one accord against Paul*. According to the view suggested above, Paul had returned after several weeks' absence, and the fresh impetus he gives to the work aroused the hostility of the Jews. With preconcerted and united action, Sosthenes being their leader, they brought Paul as a prisoner before the judgment seat. This was a chair, or raised platform, movable, but sometimes stationary, used as the official seat of a judge.

13. The charge against Paul is similar to that at Philippi and Thessalonica. (16 : 21 ; 17 : 7.) In those instances it was made by Gentiles in reference to Roman law; in the present by Jews in equivocal terms, the real reference being to the Mosaic law. **This fellow**—*this one*, uttered doubtless with contempt. **To worship God**—a phrase used in reference to the worship of Jehovah by Gentiles. (Ver. 7 ; 16 : 14.) **Persuadeth**—*solicits and incites*, and really accomplishes it. **Men**—in general Jews and Gentiles. **Contrary to law**—purposely indefinite. To promulgate a religion not sanctioned by the government was contrary to Roman law. (See on 16 : 21.) The Jews also held that Paul was a perverter of their own law (21 : 21), which the Romans allowed them to observe, but would not enforce. Luke evidently gives only a summary of the charge. Gallio learns from

14 contrary to the law. And ^u when Paul was now about to open *his* mouth, Gallio said unto the Jews, ^{*} If it were a matter of wrong, or wicked lewdness, O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you: 15 but if it be ^y a question of words and names, and of your law, look ye to it; for

16 I will be no judge of such *matters*. And he drave them from the judgment seat. 17 Then all the Greeks took ^{*} Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and beat *him* before the judgment seat. And Gallio cared for none of those things.

^u 1 Peter 3 : 14, 15. ^{*} ch. 23 : 29 ; 25 : 11 ; Rom. 13 : 3. ^y ch. 25 : 19 ; 26 : 3. ^{*} 1 Cor. 1 : 1.

what they further state, or by questioning, that the real trouble is in regard to the Jewish law. (ver. 15.) The Jews may have thought Gallio inexperienced, and this may have been their first case before him. His kind disposition, and his gentle manner toward them, may have given them hope of success. They also may have heard how Paul had been driven away from the cities of Macedonia, and perhaps thought to accomplish the same in Greece.

14. But the Jews had to deal with a different man from the magistrates and rulers of Philippi and Thessalonica. Gallio yields neither to popular clamor nor prejudice, but disposes of the case summarily and justly. Paul was about to speak in his own defense; but Gallio decides that this is unnecessary, and proceeds to dismiss the case. **If it were a matter of wrong—of injustice, violating your civil rights, or of wicked lewdness, rascality,** not directly opposed to any specific statute; if indeed it belonged to any class of offences which should come before a Roman magistrate, **reason would that I should bear with you,** and give you a patient hearing. But such, it is implied, was not the case. Gallio perceives that it was not an infraction of Roman law, nor of personal immorality and misconduct.

15. But if, as appears to be the case, **it be a question**—the most approved reading has the plural, *But if they are questions or controversies about a word or doctrine, and names and your own law*. Gallio doubtless knew something of Christianity which was spreading throughout the empire, though looking upon it as a sect of Judaism. The discussions regarding Jesus as the Messiah he regarded as a matter of doctrine and names. **Look ye to it**—it is not a matter for me to decide; it pertains to your own law, and you must see to it. Omit **For. I will be**

no judge, etc. *I do not wish to be a judge of these things.* It was not in the province of his court. The Roman law allowed the Jews to regulate their own religious matters. Compare the action of Lysias (23 : 29) and Festus (25 : 20); also of Pilate. (John 18 : 31.) There is also a kind of contemptuous indifference implied toward these Jewish and Christian matters, characteristic of such a Roman as Gallio, and indicative of the simple truthfulness of the narrative.

16. **And he drave, or drove, them from the judgment seat.** He dismissed them in a peremptory manner, but not necessarily with violence.

17. So utter a failure was this attempt of the Jews against Paul that the leader was beaten by the rabble, and the matter treated with indifference by Gallio. **Then all the Greeks.** *Greeks* should be omitted, according to the best critical authorities. There is even less authority for inserting *Jews* in place of *Greeks*, as in some later manuscripts. Simply, *And they all*, the crowd of pagans who were about the court, seeing the discomfiture of the Jews, **took Sosthenes**. A very little matter will sometimes arouse a mob, especially if they are prejudiced, as were these pagans against the Jews. *Sosthenes was the ruler of the synagogue* (see on ver. 8), who perhaps had taken the place of Crispus. As the representative of the Jewish prosecutors he is beaten publicly **before the judgment seat**, with the full knowledge of Gallio, if not in his presence. Paul in his First Epistle to the Corinthians joins with his own name *Sosthenes the brother*, as one well known to them, and then at Ephesus. If he is the same as the one mentioned here then he must have been converted later, possibly through the kindness of Paul and the disciples. (Rom. 12 : 20, 21.) But little stress can be laid on the mere name, as

18 And Paul after this tarried there yet a

good while, and then took his leave of the

it was a common one. **And Gallio cared, etc.,** or, *None of these things concerned Gallio.* In harmony with his Stoic philosophy, he treated the disorderly affair with silent and placid indifference. In his breast he very likely favored the apostle; and he may not have been indifferent to religious truth. He was right in not listening to the complaint of the Jews against Paul; but he was wrong in not keeping the peace. He doubtless shared in the general prejudice and contempt of the Romans toward the Jews: and may have viewed with secret delight the tables turned against them; and was also disposed to treat easily anything that did not really weaken the Roman authority, or seriously threaten the peace of the city. The account of the whole transaction is in full accord with what historians report of him as a man of integrity and suavity, of gentle and easy manners.

We have now entered upon the period of letter-writing in the life of Paul. His First Epistle to the Thessalonians was written from Corinth just after Timothy's return from them. (1 Thess. 3: 6.) The Second Epistle appears to have been written soon after from the same place. (1 Thess. 4: 16; 5: 1; 2 Thess. 2: 1 f.) This is confirmed by the fact that Paul joins the names of Timothy and Silas with his own in the beginning of both Epistles. Since Paul had been lately at Athens (1 Thess. 3: 1), and Silas is not mentioned at any time with Paul after this visit at Corinth, these Epistles must have been written about this time from that city. If Paul revisited Athens and made his second visit to Corinth (2 Cor. 13: 1), just before this affair before Gallio, then we may arrange dates somewhat as follows: Paul first arrived at Corinth about August 1, A. D. 52, and allowing for Jewish modes of reckoning eighteen months, he closes his labors and goes to Athens about December 1, A. D. 53, intending to go into Macedonia, but is hindered the second time (1 Thess. 2: 18) by Satan, perhaps by a return of his bodily infirmity. (2 Cor. 12: 7.) He therefore sends Timothy in his place (1 Thess. 3: 1, 2), and after

remaining a time at Athens, establishing the church, he returned to Corinth after an absence of a month or so. Both to and from Athens he may have gone by land, performing missionary labor in places on his way. This second visit to Corinth was so closely connected with his first, being separated only by an interval of a few weeks, and the first being the longer one and the more important, that Paul himself writes at times as if he had been there only once. (1 Cor. 2: 1; 3: 1, 2, 6, 10.) In the early spring of A. D. 54, Timothy returns from Thessalonica, when Paul writes to them his First Epistle; and two or three months later he sends the Second Epistle. It may be objected to so late a date for these Epistles, that Paul speaks of being separated from the Thessalonians for "a short time." (1 Thess. 2: 17.) But Paul says this, not in reference to the time when he was writing the Epistle, but to the time when he was earnestly endeavoring to "see their face." Being driven from Thessalonica (17: 5-10) he felt "bereaved" (1 Thess. 2: 17, Rev. V. c.), and longed to see them, and endeavored to do so. Perhaps his first attempt to go to them was at Berea (17: 14), or perhaps at Corinth, before the Lord appeared to him in vision. (18: 7.) Either of these, within a period of one to three months, would have been "a short time." But the words, "When we could no longer forbear" (1 Thess. 3: 1) indicate a considerably longer period, and may embrace a period of eighteen months or more, between his leaving them and his sending Timothy in his place. (1 Thess. 3: 2.) (See on ver. 11; also on 17: 15, 16. *Harmonic Arrangement of Acts*, p. 218.)

18-22. **PAUL LEAVES CORINTH AND RETURNS TO ANTIOCH BY WAY OF EPHESUS, CÆSAREA, AND JERUSALEM.** Paul probably arrived at Jerusalem in September, A. D. 54, in time for the Feast of the Tabernacles. (Ver. 18.)

18. **And Paul after this, etc.** Rather, *And Paul having tarried yet many days*—that is, after this assault of the Jews. (See on ver. 11.) During this period he may have extended his labors

brethren, and sailed thence into Syria,
and with him Priscilla and Aquila;

having ^ashorn his head in ^bCenchrea:

^a ch. 21 : 24; Num. 6 : 5, 18; 1 Cor. 9 : 20.

^b Rom. 16 : 1.

outside of Corinth, and gathered the church at Cenchrea (Rom. 16 : 1); and also have written his Epistles to the Thessalonians. (See last paragraph on ver. 17.) **A good while**—or *many days*; a note of time, varying according to circumstances, having, however, an idea of largeness rather than smallness. It can well be applied here to a period of several months. (See on 9 : 23.)

Then took his leave—or, *having bid them farewell*. See an example of his leave-taking in Acts 20 : 36. **Sailed, or departed thence into Syria**—the whole journey is briefly conceived without its interruptions.

Having shorn his head. Some, among them Meyer, suppose that this was said of Aquila. But the majority of scholars apply it to Paul. For (1) Paul is the subject of the whole sentence, and Priscilla and Aquila are only incidentally mentioned as going with him to Ephesus. "There are from ver. 18 to 23 inclusive, no less than nine aorist participles, eight of which indisputably apply to Paul, as the subject of the section, leaving it hardly open to question that the participle, *having shorn*, must be referred to him also." (ALFORD.) (2) The facts that Paul was going to Jerusalem, and his haste at Ephesus to leave for that city (ver. 21), indicate that he had taken the vow which would be completed according to the Law with sacrifices in the temple. (3) The supposition that Aquila is here meant seems to have been an after-thought, a vow being regarded as inconsistent in Paul, who repudiated the obligations of the ceremonial law. But Paul thought it sometimes expedient to regard ceremonial observances. (21 : 21-24.) (4) There seems no reason for the mention of such a fact regarding a person of minor importance like Aquila, but much reason regarding the leading personage of the narrative. **For he had a vow**. The nature of this vow has been much discussed. Neander, who regards this as a Nazarite vow, says: "There was at that time among the Jews a religious custom,

arising most probably from a modification of the Nazarite vow, for those who had been visited with sickness or any other great calamity to vow, that if they were restored, they would bring a thank-offering to Jehovah in the temple, would abstain from wine for thirty days, and would shave their heads." (Josephus, *Jew. War*, ii. 15, 1.) Paul had probably resolved, on the occasion of his deliverance from some danger during his last residence at Corinth, or on his journey from that city, publicly to express his grateful acknowledgment in the temple at Jerusalem. The form of his doing this was in itself a matter of indifference; and in the spirit of Christian wisdom he felt no scruple to become in respect of form, to the Jews a Jew, or to the Gentiles a Gentile." (*Planting and Training of the Christian Church*, p. 202.) The law concerning the Nazarite is found in Numbers, ch. 6, according to which the cutting off of the hair took place at the expiration of the vow. (21 : 24.) Abbott suggests that Paul *trimmed* his hair at Cenchrea, preparatory to the vow, purposing to cut his hair again at Jerusalem. But why record such an unimportant matter as trimming the hair? Besides, Luke says *he had a vow*, one already assumed. Farrar suggests, that "it seems to have been permitted to the Nazarite to cut his hair, provided he kept the shorn locks until he offered the burnt-offering, the sin-offering, and the peace-offering in the temple, at which time his head was shaved and all the hair burnt in the fire under the sacrifice of the peace-offerings." (*Life of St. Paul*, p. 352.) Such suggestions as the above are possible. The original institution may have been modified so as to meet the circumstances of the dispersed Jews. In view of such difficulties it is perhaps better with Alexander to regard this as "a personal or private vow, such as we read of elsewhere, the outward formalities of which would naturally be conformed to those of which the law took cognizance." (Gen. 28 : 20; Lev. 27 : 2; Num. 30 : 2; Deut. 23 : 21;

19 for he had a vow. And he came to Ephesus, and left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews. When they desired him to tarry longer time with them, he con-

21 sented not: but bade them farewell, saying, "I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you,"^d if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus.

^c ch. 19 : 21 ; 20 : 16 ; Deut. 16 : 1.

^d Rom. 15 : 32 ; 1 Cor. 4 : 19 ; James 4 : 13-15.

Judg. 11 : 30 ; 1 Sam. 1 : 11 ; 2 Sam. 15 : 7.) **Cenchrea** was the eastern and most important harbor of Corinth, about nine miles from that city, the emporium of its trade with the Asiatic shores of the Mediterranean. (See on ver. 1.) Its idolatry was of the same licentious character as that at Corinth. Its modern name is *Kikries*, where ruins mark its site.

19. And he came—rather, according to the oldest and most approved text, *they came*; that is, Priscilla and Aquila with him. (Ver. 18.) *He left them* (Priscilla and Aquila, ver. 26) *there*, at Ephesus. It seems that Paul left Silas and Timothy, to continue the work at Corinth and in Achaia. Silas is last mentioned in the Acts in ver. 5. That he continued with Paul at Corinth is evident from 1 Thess. 1 : 1 ; 2 Thess. 1 : 1. He probably returned to Jerusalem somewhat later. Timothy is again mentioned as one of those who administered to Paul at Ephesus, three years later. (19 : 22.) **Ephesus** was the capital of the province of Asia. (See on 19 : 1.) It was about two hundred and fifty miles from Corinth on the opposite and eastern side of the *Ægean Sea*, and was a stopping place in voyages between Greece and Syria. Cicero relates that he made this voyage in fifteen days, and returned in thirteen days, both long voyages. With favoring winds it could be accomplished in four or five days. **But he himself entered into the synagogue.** Paul appears to have passed a Sabbath at Ephesus and, according to his custom, entered the synagogue and *argued* with the Jews and proselytes regarding the Christ. "Luke cannot well mean that the apostle separated himself from Priscilla and Aquila and went into the synagogue without them. (*Meyer.*) So unimportant a circumstance would not be made so important. Nor is it at all probable that *there* was opposed in the writer's mind to the synagogue as being out of the city (*Alford*);

for in that case some intimation like *without the city* (see 16 : 13), or at least *going out*, would hardly be withheld from the reader." (HACKETT.)

20. They desired him to tarry longer time. A similar request was made to Paul in Antioch of Pisidia. (13 : 42.) Thus Paul made a favorable impression upon the Jews at Ephesus. His shorn head and his vow doubtless commended him to them, and helped to disabuse their minds from any prejudices which they might have received from reports concerning him. **He consented not**—his haste is best explained by his desire to reach Jerusalem soon and fulfill his vow. **I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem.** Tischendorf, Westcott and Hort, and some others omit these words as an interpolation. But they are retained and defended by Olshausen, Meyer, Alford, and others. The omission can be more easily accounted for than an interpolation. If a transcriber had been minded to add a note, it would have been rather about the vow and the offering than about the feast. The omission can be explained with great probability by supposing that some old copyists "fell into the natural mistake, still made by many readers, of believing that no visit to Jerusalem is mentioned in the context, and therefore thought it necessary to omit a promise which was not fulfilled." (ALEXANDER.) What *feast* is there meant, is uncertain. It could hardly have been the Passover, for navigation would not ordinarily be open a month before. It was therefore probably the Pentecost, or the Feast of Tabernacles. According to our arrangement of dates in this and the two preceding chapters, we prefer the latter. And this accords with Paul's brief visit at Jerusalem and his hasty return to Antioch, in order that he might, before the winter, commence his third missionary tour

22 And when he had landed at Cæsarea, and gone up, and saluted the church, he wend down to Antioch.

Paul visits Galatia and Phrygia; Apollos at Ephesus.

23 AND after he had spent some time there,

* ch. 25 : 1, 9.

through Asia Minor toward Ephesus. **I will return again unto you.** He probably now determined to make Ephesus his next field of labor; and he made haste to fulfill his promise. (Ver. 23; 19 : 1.) **If God will.** The Christian proviso. (James 4 : 15.)

22. Landed at Cæsarea. (See on 8 : 40.) **And gone up**—descriptive of the journey from the lowlands about Cæsarea to the highlands about Jerusalem. **The church**—that at Jerusalem, which was the first and mother church, and is thus mentioned as a well understood designation, in this very concise and rapid narrative. This was Paul's *fourth* visit to Jerusalem after his conversion. That it was very brief, probably only two or three days, is suggested by the words, **He saluted the church**, etc. After meeting the brethren of the church, and others who had come to the feast, and presenting necessary offerings connected with his vow, he leaves for Antioch. **He went down to Antioch**—geographically much lower than Jerusalem. Thus at Antioch in Syria Paul ended his second missionary journey. He had been absent about three years and a half. According to the above chronology (ver. 21) it was October, A. D. 54, probably early in the month.

THE THIRD MISSIONARY TOUR OF PAUL is related from this point to 21 : 16, embracing labors in Galatia and Phrygia, Ephesus, Troas, Macedonia, and Greece, and his journey back to Jerusalem, the whole occupying about three and a half years. From about the last of November of A. D. 54 to May A. D. 58.

23-28. PAUL LEAVES ANTIOCH, AND VISITS GALATIA AND PHRYGIA. APOLLOS AT EPHESUS. (1 Cor. 16 : 1, 2; Gal. 2 : 11-21.) The winter of A. D. 54, 55.

23. And after he had spent some, or a certain, time there, at Antioch—an indefinite and apparently short period. A month or two would meet the circumstances of the case.

Paul would not probably delay his departure longer than the last of November, on account of the approaching winter. It is probable that Paul's encounter with Peter occurred during this visit at Antioch. (Gal. 2 : 11 f.) In favor of this it may be said: (1) That Paul's Epistle to the Galatians shows that a reaction in favor of Judaizing was manifesting itself at Antioch. But his former visit immediately after the Apostolic Conference at Jerusalem (15 : 31, 35) was too early for such a reaction. The decrees were received with joy, and followed with peace and prosperity generally among the churches. (16 : 4, 5.) (2) Paul writes of it as of late occurrence and fresh in his mind, and it fits well this visit, when after the terms of peace between Jewish and Gentile Christians had been some time observed, the repressed Jewish opposition began to show itself. Such is the view of Neander, Hackett, Olshausen, and many others. Barnabas appears to have returned from his mission to Cyprus. (Gal. 2 : 13.) These circumstances, as well as Paul's promise to return to Ephesus (ver. 21), may have hastened his departure from Antioch.

He departed—perhaps never to return to Antioch. The route Paul took is uncertain. He probably passed hastily through Cilicia (15 : 41), thence northward to Derbe and Lystra (16 : 1), where Timothy, who may have visited his home, rejoined him. (See on ver. 19.) **Galatia and Phrygia**—The large interior regions of Asia Minor. See on 16 : 6, where they are named in reversed order. Paul now probably goes northward into Galatia, and then passes southwestward through Phrygia toward Ephesus. **In order**—visiting the churches which lay on his way through these countries. **Strengthening all the disciples**—By encouragement and instruction. (14 : 22; 1 Cor. 16 : 1.) It should be noted that Paul passed the winter in this region, as he probably did also in his second missionary tour. During these

he departed, and went over *all* the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, ^gstrengthening all the disciples.

24 ^hAnd a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man,

and ⁱmighty in the Scriptures, came to 25 Ephesus. This man was instructed in the way of the Lord: and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, ^kknowing

^fGal. 1:2; 4:14. ^gch. 14:22; 15:32, 41.
ⁱEzra 7:6; Matt. 13:52.

^h1 Cor. 1:12; 3:5, 6; 4:6; Titus 3:13.
^kch. 19:3, 4; Matt. ch. 3.

seasons he may have suffered some of the privations mentioned in 2 Cor. 11:27, "in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness." Xenophon relates the sufferings of the Ten Thousand from wind and cold and snow, a few hundred miles east of this. (*Anabasis* IV, 1, 5.) The winter of 1857 is said to have been one of great severity. In Macedonia, to the westward, the road from Philippi to Thessalonica was covered with deep snow, and became for a time impassible. Shepherds and travelers were frozen to death, and many flocks perished. In December, 1858, the thermometer fell repeatedly below zero. (*Smith's Dictionary, Neapolis.*)

24. Luke leaves Paul among the disciples of Galatia and Phrygia, while he narrates some events at Ephesus preparatory to his labors in that city. **A certain Jew named Apollos**—He was born and educated a Jew, became a disciple of John the Baptist, and was more fully instructed by Aquila and Priscilla. Going to Corinth he gained great influence by his learning and eloquence. (1 Cor. 3:6.) Later he appears to have been at or near Ephesus, when Paul was there (1 Cor. 16:12), who years after testifies his regard for him in Titus 3:13. Luther suggested that Apollos wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews, which view has been favored by many others. He was a native of **Alexandria**, a city in Egypt, named after Alexander the Great, its founder, who had planted there great numbers of Jews. It was the chief seat of Hellenistic learning and philosophy. Here the celebrated Greek revision of the Old Testament, known as the Septuagint, was made; and Philo represented the school of the Platonizing Jews. In the Apostolic age it had one of the largest libraries in the world, which helped to make it an educational center, and a rival of

Athens and Tarsus. The birth and residence of Apollos at Alexandria are an assurance that he had come in contact with the culture and learning for which that city was noted. But it is affirmed that he was **eloquent**, or *learned*. The word in the original may include both, that he was skilled in history and in utterance a rhetorician. He was especially *learned* in the Old Testament **Scriptures**, and **mighty**, or powerful, in the use of them. (2 Tim. 3:16, 17.) Literally, **came to Ephesus, being mighty**, etc. This power in the use of Scripture is placed last, because it was the chief and important thing regarding him at Ephesus and Corinth. **25. This man was instructed**, etc.; rather, *This man had been orally instructed*. The reference is to information, or elementary instruction by word of mouth. The word is translated *informed*, in 21:21, 24. He had not seen any written documents about Jesus, such as the Gospel of Matthew which had probably been written; nor any of those narratives to which Luke refers in his Gospel. (Luke 1:1.) **In the way of the Lord**—that is, Jesus. He had heard of Jesus, of his life, death, and resurrection, in a somewhat imperfect way. **Being fervent in the spirit**. Omit *the*. (See the same phrase in Rom. 12:11.) This refers to his zeal and earnestness, and not to the gifts of the Spirit which he had not yet received. **He spoke and taught diligently**, or *accurately*, so far as he knew. Compare the use of the adverb in Matt. 2:8; Luke 1:3; 1 Thess. 5:2; Eph. 5:15. **The things of the Lord**—rather, according to the oldest manuscripts, *Things concerning Jesus*, as the Christ. So far as he knew of Christ's life, death, and resurrection, he taught correctly, showing from the Old Testament Scriptures that Jesus had fulfilled prophecy, and that he was the

26 only the baptism of John. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto *them*, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.

27 And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, ¹the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, ²helped them much which

¹ 1 Cor. 16 : 3; 2 Cor. 3 : 1. ² 1 Cor. 3 : 6.

Messiah who was to come. **Knowing only the baptism of John**, which demanded repentance, faith in a coming Messiah, and a godly life. (Matt. 3 : 2, 8, 12; Mark 1 : 4; John 1 : 15, 18.) He knew nothing of the last commission, which enjoins baptism "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." (See on Matt. 28 : 20.) Apollos had probably been baptized by John himself, in his youth, when attending one of the feasts of Jerusalem during John's ministry. He appears to have known that John pointed to Jesus as the Christ, and the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. He probably knew that many of Christ's disciples had been John's disciples, and that the disciples of Jesus baptized as John had done. (John 4 : 2.) In his Alexandrian home he doubtless heard also concerning Jesus from disciples of John who had come from Palestine.

26. He began, soon after coming to Ephesus, **to speak boldly**, freely and plainly, as it was his privilege to do, **in the synagogue**, referring to the ministry of John as preparatory to the coming of the Messiah, and expressing the opinion that Jesus was the Messiah. He doubtless enforced repentance, a change of heart, and reformation of life. But he only *began* thus to teach, for Aquila and Priscilla took him to themselves and privately **expounded**, or set forth, **the way of God**, the plan of salvation, including the distinctive facts and doctrines of Christ, **more perfectly**, or *more exactly*. This is the corresponding word to that translated *diligently*, or *correctly*, in the preceding verse. It is found in 23 : 15, 20; 24 : 22; 26 : 5. Among other things they doubtless set forth the doctrine of Christ as the Son of God, his ascension to the right hand of God, the descent and gifts of the Holy Spirit, the institution of the Lord's Supper, and the last commission (Matt. 28 : 20), and the gospel equally to

Jew and Gentile. (11 : 17.) There is no evidence that Apollos was rebaptized. If he had been baptized by John, there was no need of its repetition. (See on 19 : 5.)

27. And when he was minded—or *And he desiring*, soon after being more accurately instructed, **to pass over the sea into Achaia** (ver. 12) to Corinth, the capital of the province. (19 : 1.) Hearing that Paul was soon coming, he would not wish to remain and anticipate his labors. Aquila and Priscilla doubtless told him concerning the disciples, and the opportunities for labor in Achaia, especially at Corinth. **The brethren at Ephesus**, probably gathered during the brief visit of Paul (ver. 19), and the subsequent labors of Aquila and Priscilla. This seems to have been the beginning of the church at Ephesus. It is hardly probable that there was a church there before Paul's first visit (ver. 19), although he nowhere claims to have been its founder. **Exhorting**. The order of words in the original is: *Exhorting, the brethren wrote the disciples*. Hence some supply him: *Exhorting or encouraging him the brethren wrote*, etc. So the Revised Version. This is the first reference to letters of commendation among Christians, which afterward became so common and important among the churches. Paul, in 2 Cor. 3 : 1, refers to this practice of granting such letters. **And when he was come**—to Corinth, (19 : 1.) The above incidents appear to have occurred while Paul was visiting the churches of Galatia and Phrygia (ver. 23), and a little time before his arrival at Ephesus. Apollos probably therefore went to Corinth in the early spring of A. D. 55, with the opening of navigation. **He helped them much who had believed**—Paul had planted; Apollos watered. (1 Cor. 3 : 6-10.) **Through grace**—the divine favor, through which they had believed, is recognized. Some, however, would join *grace* with *helped*, and refer it to the

28 had ^abelieved through grace: for he mightily convinced the Jews, and that

publicly, ^eshowing by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ.

^a John 1 : 12, 13; Eph. 2 : 8-10.

^e ch. 9 : 22; 17 : 3; John 5 : 46.

divine grace which sustained and blessed the efforts of Apollos, and translate, *He helped much through grace them that believed.* Both views present truths, but the first and more common view is the more natural one.

28. How he helped them is now stated. **For he mightily convinced**—rather, *For he powerfully confuted the Jews publicly.* Here we catch a view of the nervous eloquence, the powerful reasoning, and the complete triumph of Apollos over the Jewish opposition in controversy. This he did in public places, such as the synagogue, and the house of Justus. (Ver. 4, 7.) He was peculiarly fitted to meet the unbelieving Jews by his great knowledge of the Scriptures, as well as by his persuasive and reasoning powers. **That Jesus was, rather is, the Christ**—proving this from Moses and the Prophets. (Ver. 5.) His labors were attended with such marked success, that his name afterward became a watchword of a party. (1 Cor. 1. 12.) This may be the reason why he declined to return to Corinth, even when urged by Paul himself. (1 Cor. 16 : 12.) There is no hint anywhere that any jealousy ever existed between him and Paul.

BELIEVERS AND THE CHURCH. Apollos was working outside and independently of any church. He probably had never heard a Christian preacher, nor mingled among Christians. But as soon as he is instructed, he identifies himself with them and labors in connection with churches. It was the custom in the apostolic age for believers to be baptized at once, become members of a church, and immediately engage in Christian work. (2 : 41-46; 18 : 8.) Such cases as that of Apollos and the twelve disciples at Ephesus (19 : 1-7) only prove the rule. They wrought outside ignorantly; but there is no such excuse now for ignoring the church. It is not enough that a believer is working in a Christian Association or in a Young People's Society. His place is in the church of Christ, and in connection with it he should use the various in-

strumentalities for doing good. Allegiance to Christ carries along with it allegiance to his church and his cause.

PRACTICAL REMARKS.

1. However wicked a city, the gospel should be preached in it and success expected. "The church of God in Corinth! Joyful and wonderful paradox." (BENGEL.) (Ver. 1-4; 1 Cor. 6 : 10, 11.)
2. It is wise to gather churches in strategic points and at great centres. (Ver. 1-4; 13 : 14; 16 : 12; 17 : 1, 19; 19 : 8.)
3. The gospel laborer is worthy of his hire; yet there are times when a preacher should support himself in whole or in part. (Ver. 3; Luke 10 : 7; 1 Cor. 9 : 9-15; Phil. 4 : 14-16.)
4. Paul's daily labor did not prevent him from faithfully using opportunities for preaching Christ. (Ver. 3, 4; 1 Cor. 2 : 1-5; 1 Thess. 2 : 9.)
5. We should combine correct reasoning and tender persuasion in preaching. (Ver. 4; 1 Cor. 10 : 15; 2 Cor. 5 : 11.)
6. The ministry of those who are pressed and engrossed with the word is generally successful. (Ver. 5; 20 : 20; Phil. 2 : 22.)
7. It is a fearful thing to reject Christ in the preached word. (Ver. 6; Matt. 25 : 41-44.)
8. Houses and places of preaching should be located where the people are. (Ver. 7; 19 : 9.)
9. The divine order: Hearing, believing, being baptized. (Ver. 8; Mark 16 : 15, 16; Rom. 10 : 8-10.)
10. We should seek to bring whole families to Christ. (Ver. 9; 10 : 2; 2 John 4.)
11. The lives of his servants are in Christ's hands. (Ver. 9-11; Matt. 10 : 28-30.)
12. God's purpose to save men is an encouragement to work for their conversion. (Ver. 10, 11; John 10 : 16.)
13. Gospel success very often arouses opposition among the wicked. False accusation is a very natural ally of persecution. (Ver. 12, 13; 17 : 5-8.)
14. Civil officers do well to confine their official acts to civil affairs. (Ver. 14, 15; Rom. 13 : 1-7.)

Paul comes to Ephesus. Certain disciples of John rebaptized. Wonderful miracles; great success.

19 AND it came to pass, that, while *Paul* Apoi-

los was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts, came to Ephesus. And finding certain disciples, he said unto them, Have ye received the

1 Cor. 1 : 12; 3 : 5, 6. *4* ch. 11 : 15-17.

15. Worldly men have too often but small conception of the nature and magnitude of religious truth; and it is well when they recognize the fact. (Ver. 15, 16; 25 : 20, 26.)

16. The civil ruler should not be a persecutor, but he should keep the peace and thus prevent persecution. (Ver. 17; Rom. 13 : 3.)

17. Let our vows be of grateful love and obedience. (Ver. 18; Rom. 12 : 1.)

18. Every class of Christian laborers can find work suitable to do. (Ver. 19.)

19. We must keep our engagements with the Lord. (Ver. 20, 21; Ps. 50 : 4.)

20. All our plans and movements should be made dependent on the good pleasure of God. (Ver. 21; Matt. 6 : 10.)

21. We should keep in view the mission to which God has called us, and hasten to our work. (Ver. 22, 23; John 9 : 4; 1 Cor. 7 : 29-31.)

22. The Christian can always find work to do among Christians. (Ver. 23; Gal. 6 : 10.)

23. Much piety cannot make up for deficiency of knowledge and practice. (Ver. 24, 25; Heb. 5 : 11-14.)

24. A right heart, a fervent spirit, and a teachable disposition are a good preparation for discerning and receiving the truth. (Ver. 25, 26.)

25. Men of culture and ability may often learn much from Christians in humble life. (Ver. 26; 4 : 13; 1 Cor. 1 : 26 f.)

26. Salvation is all of grace. (Ver. 27; Rom. 4 : 16; Eph. 2 : 8.)

27. Christian ministers should help one another to fields of labor and places of usefulness. (Ver. 27.)

28. Christian fervor without culture is good, but with it, is better. (Ver. 28.)

Ch. 19 : Paul continues his third missionary tour and reaches Ephesus, where he baptizes twelve professed disciples of John, preaches three months in the synagogue, and two years in the school house of Tyrannus. Great miracles are performed, magical practices are renounced, and a great tumult aroused regarding the worship of the goddess Diana.

1-20. PAUL ARRIVES AT EPHESUS. HIS WORK THERE FOR TWO YEARS AND THREE MONTHS. During this period he probably wrote his Epistle to the Galatians, and also his lost Epistle to the Corinthians, 1 Cor. 5 : 9. From the spring of A. D. 55 to the spring of A. D. 57.

1. While Apollos was at Corinth—the capital of Achaia, whither he had gone. (18 : 27.) Thus Paul did not arrive at Ephesus until after the departure of Apollos. **Having passed through the upper coasts**—the upper districts, the interior mountainous region of Asia Minor, such as Galatia and Phrygia (18 : 23) and parts of the province of Asia, to the lowlands around Ephesus. It was during this visit that Paul probably directed the Galatian churches regarding systematic collections for the saints on the first day of the week. (1 Cor. 16 : 1, 2; Gal. 2 : 10.)

Came to Ephesus—in fulfillment of his promise made on his way from Corinth to Jerusalem. (18 : 20, 21.) Ephesus was the principal of the twelve Ionian cities of Asia Minor, and the emporium of the trade of the East. Under Roman rule the province of Asia was formed, B. C. 129, with Ephesus as its capital. It was situated on the western coast of Asia Minor, near the mouth of the river Cayster, partly on the plain in the valley of this river, and partly on the ridges of Mount Coressus and Mount Pion. To the north of the city lay a considerable lake, communicating with the river, and forming the inner harbor. The outer harbor of the city was formed by the river Cayster, and the bay into which it emptied. East of the lake and outside the city walls was the great temple of Artemis, or Diana, which was called one of the wonders of the ancient world. Further concerning this, the stadium and the theatre, see notes below. Asia, like Achaia, was a Roman senatorial province, and its governors were styled Proconsuls, (ver.

Holy Spirit since ye believed? And they said unto him, *†* We have not so much as

heard whether there be any Holy Spirit. 3 And he said unto them, *Unto what then*

† 1 Sam. 3 : 7.

38) who resided at Ephesus. (See on 18 : 12.) Ephesus was also a free city, and governed by its own senate, and held its courts and public assemblies. It had a considerable Jewish population and its social life was colored by Asiatic and Greek influences. It was sacked and laid waste by the Goths in A. D. 262; and, although rebuilt, it never regained its former glory. The site is now an utter desolation. Piles of rubbish and interesting ruins cover the ground, partly overgrown with vegetation.

And finding, on his first arrival, or very soon after, **certain disciples**, of Christ, as the word *disciples* always means in the New Testament when used alone. Paul also recognized them as *believers* (ver. 2) in Jesus as the Christ, but very imperfectly instructed. How crude their knowledge will appear in the next two verses. They had very likely lately come to Ephesus; or possibly in that large city they had been isolated and unacquainted with Apollos, Aquila and Priscilla, and other brethren who attended the synagogue.

2. Having found these disciples, Paul asks, **Have ye**, or, rather, *Did ye receive the Holy Spirit when ye believed?* that is, on the Lord Jesus. How Paul come to ask this question is a matter of conjecture. It doubtless came in the course of conversation, in which he discovered the crudeness of their knowledge and lack of spiritual power, and want of peace, joy, and the gifts of the Spirit. That Paul referred to the Holy Spirit, as the author of miraculous gifts, is to be inferred from ver. 6. Besides, he would have taken for granted that they had received the Spirit as commonly enjoyed by all disciples. (See 8 : 17; 10 : 44, 45.) The question seemed surprising to them, and their answer surprising to him. **We have not so much as heard**, etc. Rather, *We did not even hear*, at the time we believed, *whether there is a Holy Spirit, or whether the Holy Spirit was given*. Either translation is allow-

able. It is hardly conceivable that these disciples were entirely ignorant of the Holy Spirit. John had foretold the baptism in the Holy Spirit by the Messiah who was already among them. (John 1 : 32-34.) Jews and proselytes were also familiar with the Holy Spirit from the Old Testament Scriptures, Ps. 51 : 11; Isa. 63 : 10; Joel 2 : 28. But these disciples may not have even heard the supernatural power of the Spirit mentioned when they believed, and hence were ignorant of Pentecost and its wonders. Or, with almost the same meaning, they may not have heard that the Spirit was present or given, that he had come in the power foretold. Compare John 7 : 39, where it is said *The Spirit was not yet given*, he had not yet come, *because Jesus was not yet glorified*. With either interpretation they were ignorant of the great Pentecostal outpouring, and of the gifts of the Spirit, and of the privilege of believers in partaking of his power.

3. The answer of these disciples reveals to Paul something wrong in their religious history. He therefore asks, **Unto what then were ye baptized?**—unto what name and confession were ye baptized, that ye did not hear of the Holy Spirit and of his presence and gifts among believers? They answer, **Unto John's baptism**. When or where is unknown. Some suppose Apollos had baptized them. But they probably had come to Ephesus after he had left. Besides, if he had baptized them, he would doubtless have instructed them into more correct views of Christianity.

The disciples of John were numerous and widely scattered. They consisted first of those who became disciples of Christ; second, a small sect who held that John was the Messiah; and third, those who, removed from Palestine, held substantially what John taught. These twelve did not belong to the second class, for they professed to believe in Jesus. (Ver. 1, 2.) Neither could they be fully included in the first, for they had not really entered into the

were ye baptized? And they said, ^a Unto
4 John's baptism. Then said Paul, ^t John
verily baptized with the baptism of re-
pentance, saying unto the people, that

they should believe on him which should
come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.
5 When they heard *this*, they were baptized

^a ch. 18 : 25.

^t ch. 13 : 24, 25 ; Matt. 3 : 11, 12.

completed discipleship of Christ. They were rather those of the third class, who, accepting John's teachings so far as they had learned them, held somewhat imperfectly that Jesus was the Messiah. Their views were very dim and uncertain, quite different in this respect from those of Apollos (18 : 25) ; from which we infer that they had not been baptized by John himself, but by some one of his disciples outside of Palestine. For they confess their ignorance of that which John had taught concerning Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

4. Paul explains the nature of John's baptism. This implies that they had not been properly taught. It was a **baptism of repentance**, one that enjoined and symbolized repentance. (See on Luke 3 : 3.) His baptism and the ministry which it implied were preparatory and transient. He did not intend that they should form any permanent organization of their own ; but on the contrary he exhorted the people **that they should believe on him who should come after him**. This was a feature and design of his ministry. It was introductory to Christ. Paul enlarges upon this coming one, showing that it is **on Jesus** they were to believe and with him to be permanently united. He doubtless dwelt upon his sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension, and the consequent outpouring of the Spirit in fulfillment of the prediction of John. Some and perhaps most of these things were new to them. Whether they had saving faith before, they have it now. At the most they had before enjoyed but the dawn of faith, now its full sunlight.

5. Beza and some other older commentators, on opposing what they deemed the repetition of baptism by the Anabaptists on the one hand, and the disparaging of John's baptism by the Roman Catholics on the other, "oddly enough suppose this verse to

mean *And the people when they heard him (John) were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus*. This obviously is contrary to fact historically." (ALFORD.) John never baptized in the name of Jesus ; he baptized at least six months before he knew Jesus as the Messiah. "This view of the passage may be said to be obsolete at present." (HACKETT.) **And when they heard this**—and to hear in their case was to accept and obey—they were **baptized**. Faith and baptism were closely united in apostolic days. That they were baptized *into the name of the Lord Jesus* implied their faith on him as their Lord and only Saviour, and their former baptism in some way as irregular or defective. Luke says nothing of the formula of baptism, for that would be taken for granted, but briefly states their public confession of Christ in baptism. Perhaps Timothy baptized them. (18 : 23 ; 1 Cor. 1 : 17.) The oft-repeated question arises, Why were these disciples rebaptized? It was not merely because they had received John's baptism. For the twelve apostles, and many others of John's disciples were not rebaptized. It is evident that those who received John's baptism, while it had a lawful existence, were admitted into the church without re-baptism. John also was *sent* to baptize ; he was the baptizer, but only temporarily to introduce Christ. (John 1 : 31.) With him his office ceased. He had no authority to commission his followers to continue his baptism. Baptism by them could not therefore be accepted by Christians as valid baptism. Moreover, after the last commission, baptism must be performed "in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." These disciples had not been baptized according to this formula (ver. 2), but probably by some disciple of John long after John's death, and the giving of the last commission. Apollos was not rebaptized, because, like the apostles, he was bap-

6 ^a in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had ^a laid *his* hands upon them, ^r the Holy Spirit came on them; and they
7 spake with tongues, and prophesied. And all the men were about twelve.
8 ^a And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months,

disputing and ^apersuading the things
9 ^b concerning the kingdom of God. But ^c when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil ^d of that way before the multitude, ^e he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus.

^v ch. 8 : 16. ^a ch. 6 : 6 ; 8 : 17. ^r ch. 10 : 45, 46 ; 1 Cor. 14 : 22. ^s ch. 17 : 2 ; 18 : 4. ^s 2 Cor. 5 : 11. ^b ch. 1 : 3 ; 28 : 23. ^c Jer. 7 : 26 ; Jude 10. ^d ch. 9 : 2 ; 24 : 14. ^e ch. 13 : 46.

tized during the ministry of John and probably by John himself. No argument can be drawn from this passage for repeating valid baptism.

6. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, there was the gift of the Holy Spirit. **They spake with tongues and prophesied—** they spake in other tongues, and uttered inspired words in their own. (See on 2 : 4.) The gift of the Spirit is only spoken of in the Acts, at Pentecost, in Samaria, when Peter and John were sent from Jerusalem; at Caesarea, in connection with Cornelius and his company; and here at Ephesus. It was not given to enable the apostles to preach in other languages, but as “a sign to the unbelieving.” (1 Cor. 14 : 22.) In regard to speaking with tongues and prophesying, see Paul’s famous exposition, two years later, in 1 Cor. 14 : 1–40. The superiority of Christianity over all communities holding to John, and formally and crudely to Jesus, was demonstrated by the gift of the Spirit. Christianity was also emphatically a religion of the Spirit; so that without the Spirit it is not truly and really Christianity.

7. All the men were about twelve— which means that there were not more than that number. Women are not mentioned (1 : 4), but the blessings of the gospel would not likely be limited to the male portion of this Johanic community. This was a good beginning of Paul’s work at Ephesus; and may have contributed largely to successful efforts among similar classes of persons there and in the province of Asia. (Ver. 10.)

8. Having related this incident which occurred on Paul’s arrival at Ephesus, Luke proceeds to narrate his residence and labors there. According to his usual custom, Paul enters the

synagogue and preaches, having also been previously invited. (18 : 20.) **He spake boldly—** plainly and freely. (18 : 26.) **For the space of three months,** without opposition from the Jewish community. This definite note of time does not, according to Jewish reckoning, necessarily denote three full months, yet approximately nearer three than two. **Disputing—or reasoning and persuading,** striving to produce conviction, acceptance and belief. (18 : 4.) **Concerning the kingdom of God—the** New Dispensation, its nature, its doctrines, and claims. (See on 8 : 12.)

9. The results were similar to that in other places, but more gradual. **Some were hardened and were unbelieving.** They became less and less disposed to hear and accept the teachings of Paul, until they positively oppose, *speaking evil of the way* of salvation, the doctrines and practices of the religion of Christ (16 : 17 ; 18 : 25.) **Before the multitude—the** congregation in the synagogue. This became so annoying that further efforts in the synagogue seemed impracticable. (18 : 6.) So Paul **departed from them—** formally withdrew, and **separated the disciples,** into a congregation by themselves. They certainly became a permanent church now, if they were not before. (See on 18 : 27.) While they had publicly worshipped in the synagogue, they must have had their private gatherings for “the breaking of bread and prayers.” (2 : 42.) **Disputing or reasoning** (ver. 8) **daily in the school, or lecture room, of one Tyrannus.** Some have thought that Tyrannus was a Jew, but without sufficient evidence. Both his name—not a common one—and *the school* indicate him as a Gentile. He was probably a Greek teacher, a lecturer on philosophy, or on medicine,

10 And ^tthis continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in

Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

^t see ch. 20 : 31.

as Plumptre suggests. The name is found in the inscriptions in the burial place of the deceased members of the emperor's household, perhaps of a son a generation later, who is styled a physician. The preaching of Paul would come less in conflict with the instructions of a medical teacher than of a philosopher. Plumptre also suggests that through Luke, "the beloved physician," who was still at Philippi, Paul may have been introduced favorably to Tyrannus. He seems not to have been a convert to Christianity, as he is not styled a believer. It is a probable supposition that he became one. While he taught publicly in the schoolhouse of Tyrannus, the disciples had their private gatherings "from house to house." (20 : 20.)

10. For the space of two years—in addition to the three months of ver. 8. This, according to Jewish reckoning represents two years approximately; that is, nearer two years than one. It probably terminated before the events related in ver. 21 and onward. In 20 : 31, Paul says he labored three years among them, which would require an addition of several months. His ceaseless labors "night and day," "with tears," "keeping nothing back," but declaring "the whole counsel of God" are brought to view in 20 : 18-35.

Some time during these *two years* Paul probably wrote his Epistle to the Galatians. Upon this scholars are not entirely agreed. But it is now generally admitted to have been after his second visit to Galatia (18 : 23), for he speaks of a *first* visit (Gal. 4 : 13) which implies a second; and his language seems to contain an allusion to two visits. (Gal. 4 : 13-16; 5 : 3.) It was also after Paul's rebuke to Peter. (Gal. 2 : 14; see on 18 : 23.) It is also generally believed to have been written some time during this third missionary tour, between A. D. 55 and 58. Dr. Lightfoot (1865) and some others suppose that it was written about the same time as the Epistle to the Romans, in the winter of A. D. 57-8, from its resemblance to that

Epistle. But the verbal resemblances consist largely in quotations from the Old Testament. The similarities in doctrines and trains of thought are such as would be expected in one taught by revelation. (Gal. 1 : 12.) There are indeed resemblances to his early addresses. Thus, in regard to justification by faith (13 : 28, 39), and the accountability of the heathen (14 : 15-17; Rom. 1 : 19; 2 : 15, etc.) I believe that no certain conclusion can be derived from these resemblances. But Dr. Hackett (1858), and Dr. Weiss of Berlin (1886), and others, believe that it must have been written at Ephesus before the First Epistle to the Corinthians. This is a very natural inference from Paul's own language: "I marvel that ye are *so soon* removed from him that called you." (Gal. 1 : 6.) His second visit was in the winter of A. D. 54-5; and this change had largely come about since that time. The *so soon* more naturally applies to a few months than to a period of three years. The communication between Ephesus and Galatia was easy. It is therefore preferable to fix the date early in the year A. D. 56.

So that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word, etc. The province of Asia is meant, but the term would in a general way be applied to all the western part of Asia Minor. Ephesus was a great commercial center. Thus Paul had constant opportunity to preach to those who came thither. His great success and his wonderful miracles (ver. 11) would also attract crowds from all parts to hear him. His helpers also, such as Timothy, Epaphras, Titus, and others, doubtless traveled and founded churches in other cities. (16 : 19.) Thus the seven churches of Asia may have originated. (Rev. 1 : 1; See Col. 4 : 13-16.) Epaphras gathered the church at Colosse. (Col. 1 : 6, 7.) Apollos too, seems to have returned, and was laboring in some portion of that district. (1 Cor. 16 : 12.) In Ephesus also believers were multiplied, so that several congregations were gathered at different houses, as that at the house of Aquila

11 And ^aGod wrought special miracles
12 by the hands of Paul: ^bso that from his
body were brought unto the sick hand-
kerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases de-

parted from them, and the evil spirits
went out of them.

13 Then certain of the vagabond Jews,
^cexorcists, took upon them to call over

^a ch. 14 : 3.

^b ch. 5 : 15 ; 2 Kings 4 : 29, etc.

^c Matt. 12 : 27.

^d Mark 9 : 38.

and Priscilla. (1 Cor. 16 : 19.) Hence the necessity of a number of elders or pastors to look after them. (20 : 17.) About forty years after this Pliny, governor of Bithynia, adjoining the province of Asia, in a letter to the Emperor Trajan, speaks of the great number of Christians of all ranks and ages, of both sexes, not only in the cities, but in the villages and remoter districts. During the latter part of these two years Paul probably wrote his lost Epistle to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 5 : 9), in which he enjoined the exclusion of all profligates from the church.

11. God wrought special, extraordinary, miracles by the hands of Paul. What distinguished these miracles was that they were wrought without his personal presence and agency, as related in the next verse. Luke makes but little account of the general miracles of Paul, since the last he relates was the healing of the possessed slave at Philippi five years before (16 : 18), and makes no record of his miracles at Corinth. (2 Cor. 12 : 12.)

12. So that handkerchiefs or aprons, which Paul used in his daily toil (20 : 34), *were carried away from his body*, literally, *from his skin, unto the sick*. This showed great faith, and the great power of God in attesting his truth and Paul as his apostle. Compare how God wrought similarly through Peter. (5 : 15, 16 ; Gal. 2 : 8.) Compare also the healing of the woman with the issue of blood, and other miracles by our Saviour. (Matt. 9 : 31 ; 14 : 35, 36.) Ephesus was famous for its pre-eminence in magic; for its charms or amulets, known as Ephesian letters, which were superstitiously believed to insure a person's success in all his undertakings, to be a preservative against evils, and a reliever of demoniacal influences. God through Paul showed his superiority to all such heathenish pretensions. By exhibitions of his divine power he meets superstition on its own ground, and gives just

such evidences as would overwhelmingly convince the Ephesians that Paul was his servant, and his teachings true. God can work, and does work, in any way he pleases.

13. In contrast to the miracles of Paul, Luke relates the futile attempts of certain Jews to imitate him. **Vagabond Jews**—descriptive of their mode of life, *going about*, like jugglers. **Exorcists**—those who employed a formula of conjuration for expelling demons. The Jews had a wide reputation throughout the Roman world as exorcists. Many were living on the credulity of others, professing to be magicians. Such was Simon Magus in Samaria (8 : 9), and Elymas in Cyprus. (13 : 8.) There seemed to be a national tendency toward these dark arts, and the Old Testament contains severe laws against them. (Exod. 22 : 18 ; Lev. 20 : 27 ; Deut. 18 : 10, 11 ; 1 Sam. 28 : 3, 9.) Ephesus, the centre of Oriental philosophy and witchcraft, was a common resort of magicians. It is thought that the famous arch-magician and teacher, Apollonius of Tyana, had visited Ephesus just previous to Paul's arrival, and had given a fresh impulse to the mysterious arts. The Jewish exorcists professed to have derived their art from King Solomon; and members of the Sanhedrin were expected to have a certain knowledge of the art, in order to be able to try those accused of employing it. It indicates the spiritual blindness and depravity of these Jews that they classed Paul with themselves, and his miracles with their magic. (See on 8 : 9 ; 13 : 6 ; Matt. 12 : 27.) **We adjure**—rather, according to the best critical authorities, **I adjure**, *I solemnly require you*, etc. Their use of the name of Jesus was an acknowledgment of his superiority.

“Strange to say, exorcism became a church practice. Tertullian and Origen speak of it. At a later period exorcists formed one of the lower orders of the clergy, and the clergy of the Roman

them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by
 14 Jesus whom Paul preacheth. And there were seven sons of *one* Sceva, a Jew, and
 15 chief of the priests, which did so. And the evil spirit answered and said, ^k Jesus I know, and Paul I know: but who are
 16 ye? And ^lthe man in whom the evil

spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

17 And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus: and ^mfear fell on them all; and the name
 18 of the Lord Jesus was magnified. And

^k Mark 1: 24, 25. ^l Lev. 10: 3. ^m ch. 5: 5, 11; Ps. 64: 9; Luke 1: 65; 7: 16.

Catholic Church are still ordained exorcists before being ordained as priests. At baptism both the Greek and Roman Catholic Churches use formulas of exorcism. The Reformed Churches at the Reformation renounced exorcism, but Luther and Melancthon were in favor of its retention. The Prayer Book of Edward VI. retained a formula of exorcism, "I command thee, unclean spirit . . . that thou come out of this infant," etc. (HOWSON AND SPENCE.)

14. Such were seven sons of **Sceva**. Nothing more is known of them except what is related here. Sceva was a Jew and a chief priest, probably connected in some way with the Aaronic priesthood. (See on 4: 23.) Possibly he may have been an apostate Jew, and one of the priests of Diana. The Greek word rendered *chief priest* was in general use among the heathen, and occurs repeatedly on coins and inscriptions relating to the worship of Diana of Ephesus. **Who did so**—were in the habit of doing this.

15. In one of these attempts the evil spirit answered two of them. See next verse. **Jesus I know, and Paul I know.** Two Greek verbs are here rendered *know*. They may be distinguished thus; *Jesus I recognize*, acknowledging his authority and power, and *Paul I am well acquainted with*, as the servant of God. (See 16: 17.) **But who are ye?** Expressions of contempt and indignation at them as powerless opponents.

16. The expression of contempt by the evil spirit is followed by corresponding acts by the man himself, through whom the demon exerted his power. Evil spirits are distinguished from the possessed, as well as from diseases in ver. 12. Regarding demoniacal possession, see on Matt. 4: 24. **Leaped on them.** Thus the man under the power of the demon attacked them furiously. **Over-**

came, or mastered, them—according to the oldest manuscripts, *mastered both of them*, which implies that only two of the sons of Sceva were attempting to expel the demons at this time. **Prevailed**—literally, *was strong*, against them, reminding us of the great strength of the demoniac of the Gerasenes. (Mark 5: 24.) **Naked**—partially stripped of their clothing, probably of their outer garment. (John 21: 7.) As Jesus overcame Satan and the powers of darkness when upon earth, so it was becoming that his power should be manifested in like manner through the apostles, and especially that the superiority of the gospel over magic should be demonstrated at Ephesus, the very seat of its power.

17. **This became known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus.** "Nothing is more mortifying or better calculated to provoke the contempt of the community than the unexpected exposure of mysterious pretensions, such as were assumed by these exorcists. The [evil] spirit was enraged at their insulting pretensions, and doubtless enjoyed the joke of exposing them. . . . They were stripped and wounded, presenting a very ludicrous aspect as they passed along the streets. While all Ephesus was laughing at them, it was remembered that the spirit acknowledged the authority of Jesus, and of Paul, and that a licentious use of the name of Jesus was the cause of all their trouble." (MCGARVEY.) **And fear, a religious awe, fell on them all**—on the people generally. (5: 5, 11.) **The name of the Lord Jesus was magnified**—praised and extolled. (10: 46.) Thus the ignominious defeat of the exorcists brought honor upon the name of Jesus, as a name above every name. (Phil. 2: 9.)

18. And now followed a scene, one of the wonders in early missionary

many that believed came, and ^a confessed, 19 and shewed their deeds. Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and ^b burned them before all men: and they counted the price of

them, and found it fifty thousand *pieces* of 20 silver. ^c So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

21 After these things were ended, Paul ^d purposed in the spirit, when he had

^a Prov. 28 : 13; Matt. 3 : 6. ^b Gen. 35 : 4. ^c ch. 6 : 7; 12 : 24; 1 Cor. 16 : 9. ^d ch. 20 : 22; Rom. 15 : 23-28; 1 Cor. 16 : 5-11; 2 Cor. 1 : 15-18.

work: Confession, exposure, and renunciation. **Many that believed**—that is, many believers. They may have been recent believers, yet converted before the failure of the sons of Sceva. **Confessed and shewed**—or *made known their deeds*. They made a full and frank confession of their participation in magic arts. Their heathen education and superstition had taught them to reverence such practices, but now they realize the impropriety and wickedness of so doing. The truthfulness of Luke is illustrated by this humiliating record of many of Paul's converts, who had committed deeds so utterly inconsistent with the pure and holy religion they professed. They were the dupes of the jugglers mentioned in the next verse. So Hackett.

19. **Many of them, or Not a few of those also who used, or practiced curious, or magic, arts**—the jugglers. The word *curious*, is used in the sense of *inquisitive, impertinent*, prying into the secret things of God. (Deut. 29 : 29. See on ver. 12.) **Brought their books together**, which treated on astrology, necromancy, and doubtless filled with incantations, recipes for charms, formulas for casting out evil spirits, and the like. Perhaps some of the books of Apollonius were among them. (Ver. 13.) Among them also may have been books of the Essenes, a Jewish sect of which we know but little, who had certain secret works on the occult sciences. (DR. LIGHTFOOT, *Com. on Colossians*, pp. 77-79.) **The books were written rolls or scrolls. Burned, or were burning them before all**; one after another flinging their books into the burning pile. **Fifty thousand pieces of silver**. As Luke was writing especially for Greek readers, the current Greek coin, called the *drachma*, is probably meant, worth about fifteen cents of our money. The total amount may

be roughly put at about eight thousand dollars, representing, however, a much larger sum, considering the higher value of money then than now. Books, however, were much more expensive than now, especially of that class.

20. Luke briefly sums up the progress of Christ's cause at Ephesus, as illustrated by the preceding incidents. **So mightily, etc.** *Thus with power the word of the Lord Jesus, the gospel, grew in its influence and in the number of its adherents (6: 7; 12: 24) and extended its power in producing such great results.* Paul, in his First Epistle to the Corinthians, written from Ephesus, alludes to these very events when he writes: "For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries." (1 Cor. 16 : 9.) Paul had sent Timothy to Corinth (1 Cor. 4 : 17) by way of Macedonia (ver. 20, 21), who had not yet arrived there when he wrote the Epistle. (1 Cor. 16 : 10.) See on ver. 22, where is noted the exact time of this Epistle.

21-41. PAUL PROPOSES TO LEAVE EPHEBUS; BUT TARRIES FOR A TIME. DEMETRIUS EXCITES A TUMULT. (Rom. 1 : 13-15; 1 Cor. 4 : 17-19; 16 : 19; Eph. 2 : 19-22.) This extended into the spring and probably the summer of A. D. 57; to Pentecost in May, or, more probably, to about the first of July, or August. (See on ver. 10; also on 20 : 1.)

21. **After these things were ended**—after the events just related, which completed the two years and three months of ver. 8 and 10. Some suppose that Paul made his second visit to Corinth, a brief one, which is implied in 1 Cor. 13 : 1, just previous to this period. But it could hardly have been at this time since Paul, in his First Epistle depends not at all on his own observation, but on oral accounts and written statements and questions. (1 Cor. 1 : 11; 7 : 1; 8 : 1; 11 : 18; 16 : 17, 18.) Dr. Howson takes the affirm-

passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have
 22 been there, ^rI must also see Rome. So he sent into Macedonia two of ^sthem that ministered unto him, Timotheus and ^tErastus; but he himself stayed in Asia for a season.

The uproar excited by Demetrius, and its suppression.

23 AND ^uthe same time there arose no
 24 small stir about that way. For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana,

^r ch. 23 : 11.

^s ch. 13 : 5.

^t Rom. 16 : 23; 2 Tim. 4 : 20.

^u 2 Cor. 1 : 8.

ative of this question in *Life and Epistles*, Vol. II, p. 21 f; and Dr. Paley the negative in *Horæ Paulinæ*, on 2 Cor. 13 : 1. It seems better, however, to place this second visit earlier. See on 19 : 11; also a discussion of this subject in *Harmonic Arrangement*, p. 216 ff.

Paul purposed in the spirit—in his mind under divine direction. **When he passed through Macedonia and Achaia**—the two Roman provinces of Greece. His object was to stir up and confirm the churches, and correct certain abuses at Corinth. The account of this visit is found in 20 : 1-3. **To go to Jerusalem**—to carry the collection for the poor saints there. (24 : 17; Rom. 15 : 25; 1 Cor. 16 : 1-3.) This visit he accomplished a year later. (21 : 15.) **I must also see Rome.** This had been a long cherished plan, perhaps from the time he first met Aquila and Priscilla, who came from Rome to Corinth (18 : 2), and told him of matters there. (Rom. 1 : 13; 15 : 23-28.) This purpose was carried out three years later, not, however, as he had planned, but as a prisoner and in chains. (28 : 16, 20, 21.) His purpose also embraced a visit to Spain. (Rom. 15 : 28.) Perhaps about this time he began to write his Epistles to the Romans.

22. So he sent, rather, And having sent into Macedonia, to Thessalonica, Philippi, and perhaps Berea. **Timothy** was to continue his journey to Corinth, making but a short delay in Macedonia. (1 Cor. 4 : 17.) This is one of the many confirmations of the Acts by incidental allusions in Paul's Epistles. **Erastus** has been quite commonly identified with the city treasurer of Corinth, mentioned in Rom. 16 : 23. But the one named here and in 2 Tim. 4 : 20 seems to have been an attendant of Paul, and could hardly have been long away from his official duties. It is possible that he may have

held the office a little later than this for a brief period. Many of the best critics suppose that there were two disciples of this name, as the name was not unusual. **But he himself stayed in** the province of Asia **for a season.** This probably embraced several months' labor at Ephesus and vicinity.

Just at this time after sending away Timothy and Erastus, Paul sent his First Epistle to the Corinthians. It could not have been at his first visit to Ephesus, for he did not tarry there at all. (18 : 19, 20.) See note on ver. 20. In this epistle Paul makes evident allusions to the games and dramatic exhibitions to which he had become familiar at Ephesus. Thus he refers to fighting with wild beasts (1 Cor. 15 : 32), as being made a spectacle and doomed to death (1 Cor. 4 : 9), as running not as uncertainly, and fighting, not "as one that beateth the air" (1 Cor. 9 : 26), as buffeting his body and bringing it into bondage like an athlete. He writes with vividness, as if the scenes were passing around him. Possibly the Artemision month of A. D. 57, corresponding to portions of our April and May, was just beginning,—a month consecrated by special decree to the goddess Diana, and devoted to festivals and processions, gladiatorial games in the theatre, and races of runners and of chariots in the stadium. This certainly harmonizes with his purpose to remain at Ephesus till Pentecost, which probably occurred soon after the close of this sacred month.

23. Luke proceeds to record one of the greatest popular excitements produced by Paul's ministry. It is styled **no small stir or tumult.** **About that way**—the way of the Lord, a very common designation. (See on 9 : 2.) "There is a striking resemblance between the tumult at Ephesus and that at Philippi. They were both distin-

25 brought *no small gain* unto the craftsmen: whom he called together with the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have 26 our wealth. Moreover ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost

throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that *they be no gods, which are 27 made with hands*: so that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but also that the temple of the great god-

* ch. 16 : 16, 19.

† ch. 14 : 15 ; 17 : 29 ; Ps. 115 : 4 ; Isa. 44 : 10-20 ; Jer. 10 : 3, 5.

guished from all other persecutions mentioned in the Acts, in that they were not caused by the Jews, but by Gentiles; both also originated in interested motives, the loss of gain; both were characterized by senseless rioting and cruel violence, and in both the actors were restrained from proceeding to extreme measures." (DR. ORMISTON, in *Meyer*.)

24. Demetrius, a silversmith—a silver-beater, or worker in silver, who made silver shrines or temples of **Diana**, or *Artemis*. Demetrius was doubtless a large manufacturer of small silver models of the temple and statue of Diana, which people carried around with them in their journeys, as a preventive of diseases and dangers, and used in their homes as objects of worship. *Diana* was the Roman name, and *Artemis* the Greek name of the guardian goddess of the great temple at Ephesus. She seems to have been of an Oriental rather than of a Greek type, and was similar to Astarte and other female divinities of the East. She was the goddess of the productive and nutritive powers of nature. (See on ver. 35.) **Brought no small gain**—work or business to the craftsmen or artisans. The models were bought by pilgrims as memorials of their visit, and were sent as articles of traffic into distant countries.

25. With the workmen of like occupation. The craftsmen of the preceding verse probably represented the finer artisans, and the workmen of this verse the general laborers in rougher work. Demetrius probably had hundreds of men in his employ; and there were doubtless manufactories beside his own. **And said.** The address is selfish, but candid. He appeals first of all to their fear of losing their business and their wealth. **Ye know that by this craft we have our wealth or prosperity.** (Ver. 24.)

26. This charge against Paul is truthful. While he had not made any direct and public assaults upon the temple and goddess Diana, he had taught that **they be no gods, which are made with hands.** (See 14 : 15 ; 17 : 24-29.) The great success and influence ascribed to Paul accords with Luke's statement in ver. 10.

27. So that, etc. And not only is there danger that **our craft**, rather, *our branch of business, come into contempt*, and thus prove worthless. The word translated *craft* is different from that in ver. 25, and refers to that lucrative part of their business connected with the making of shrines, which was now in special danger. Demetrius appeals next to their veneration of their temple, and their reverence for their goddess. **But also that the temple . . . should be despised, or be accounted nothing**, and thus be brought into contempt. **And her magnificence should be destroyed, she whom all Asia and the world worshippeth.** This is a strong expression with much truth. The idol was widely venerated and the temple, with that of Delphi, was the most famous in the world, and was the resort of people from all countries. "The sun, it was said, saw nothing in his course more magnificent than Diana's temple." It was built of white marble. On the night in which Alexander was born (356 B. C.) it was burned by a fanatic named Herostratus; but it was rebuilt and adorned more magnificently than before. Its general appearance is shown on an ancient Ephesian coin, which also exhibits the head of the Emperor Nero. In A. D. 262 it was robbed of its treasures and defaced by the Goths, after which it gradually fell into ruins, and was so completely covered with the sand and mud of the river that its site was a matter of conjecture, till the remark-

dess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth.

28 And when they heard *these sayings*, they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians.

29 And the whole city was filled with confusion: and having caught ² Gaius and ³ Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with 30 one accord into the theatre. And when Paul would have entered in unto the peo-

* Rom. 16 : 23 ; 1 Cor. 1 : 14 ; 3 John 1.

* ch. 20 : 4 ; 27 : 2 ; Col. 4 : 10 ; Philem. 24.

able discoveries of Mr. T. A. Wood (1863-74) brought it to light. The platform on which the temple stood was four hundred and eighteen feet long, two hundred and thirty-nine feet wide; and the temple itself was three hundred and forty-two by one hundred and sixty-three feet. Eight columns stood in front, as seen on coins and medals, and the whole number is estimated at one hundred, about fifty-five feet eight inches in height, and each the gift of a king or of some devout worshiper. Its treasury in its palmy days became a great bank of deposit, and vast wealth was accumulated. Connected with its services was a large establishment of celibate priests and virgin priestesses; and also teachers and ministering boys. Besides those represented by Demetrius, there were the butchers who sold victims for sacrifice, the surveyors and masons who looked after the repairs, and others, all of whom depended on the temple for their livelihood. Paul frequently uses the imagery of a temple in his epistles, and especially in that to the Ephesians, in allusion perhaps to this temple. (See 1 Cor. 3 : 9-17; Eph. 2 : 19-22; 1 Tim. 3 : 15; 6 : 19; 2 Tim. 2 : 19, 20.) See further on *Ephesus*, ver. 1.

28. When they heard this. Demetrius probably made this speech in some large open space near the manufactories of the shrines; and perhaps not far from the temple, which was outside of the city wall. They were full of wrath—against “this Paul” (ver. 26) and the Christians. And cried out—were crying out, denoting continuous action. Probably marching and rushing through the streets, gathering crowds after them, with the cry, Great is Diana of the Ephesians. (See on ver. 24.)

29. And the whole city—some of the better manuscripts omit *whole*—was filled with confusion, or with

the disturbances of this frenzied, riotous crowd. Having caught—or seized Gaius and Aristarchus. It was a kind providence that they did not find Paul. This *Gaius* is not mentioned elsewhere. He is not the one from Derbe (20 : 4), nor the one from Corinth (Rom. 16 : 23; 1 Cor. 1 : 14), and probably not the one to whom John writes (3 John 1). *Aristarchus* was of Thessalonica (20 : 4), and went with Paul to Rome (27 : 2), and became a voluntary sharer of his exile and captivity (Col. 4 : 10), and his fellow-worker. (Philem. 24.) They rushed with one accord into the theatre—where dramatic exhibitions were held, gladiators fought, and criminals were sometimes exposed to wild beasts. It was a favorite meeting place of the citizens for business, and on public occasions. The remains of the theatre are still extant, exhibiting the usual semicircular, or horse-shoe shape, open to the air, with seats ranged around in tiers one above another. Its seating capacity is estimated to have been from thirty to fifty-seven thousand. According to the last estimate it was the largest in the world. The temple of Diana was in full view, just across the market-place. It would seem that while they were rushing toward the theatre they seized Gaius and Aristarchus, either from the house where they were, or from the street. Had it not been for the timely interference of the town-clerk, their lives may have been taken. (Ver. 35.) Paul, no doubt, had in mind the gladiatorial contests in the theatre, when he so vividly describes the armor of the Christian warrior. (Eph. 6 : 10-18.)

30. When Paul would have entered. In this we see the bold and sympathetic character of Paul. He seems to have been out of the reach of the mob, when they seized his companions. But he was anxious for their safety, and zealous for the truth. The disciples suffered him not, among

31 ple, the disciples ^b suffered him not. And certain of the chief of Asia, which were his friends, sent unto him, desiring *him* that he would not adventure himself into
32 the theatre. Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was confused; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come to-

33 gether. And they drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And ^c Alexander beckoned with the hand, and would have made his defence unto the people. But when they knew that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, *Great is Diana of the Ephesians.*

^b 2 Sam. 18 : 3.^c 1 Tim. 1 : 20 ; 2 Tim. 4 : 14.

whom doubtless were Aquila and Priscilla, who, at this or some other time at Ephesus, "laid down their own necks" for his life; also, brethren, of the Ephesians, who knew the reverence of their countrymen for their goddess, and the deadly peril to which Paul would expose himself. **The people**—who were a tumultuous assembly. (Ver. 32-40.)

31. And certain of the chief of Asia—the *Asiarchs*, who were officers having charge of festivals in the Roman province of Asia. They were ten in number, chosen annually by the cities of Asia, and were required to bear themselves the expenses of the costly games, which were held in the month of May, in honor of Diana. They were, consequently, men of wealth; and having been once chosen they retained the title during life. **Who were his friends**, or *friendly to him*, without implying that they were Christians. Their duties at the heathenish games were inconsistent with a Christian profession. Possibly some of them may have been secret believers. Paul had great power in attracting honorable friends, such as Sergius Paulus, Gallio, Felix, and Festus, and the centurion on the voyage to Rome. It was certainly remarkable that such leading and prominent men in heathenish sports should have shown such a friendly and solicitous care for Paul; and as Akerman remarks, it is "an assertion which no fabricator of a forgery would have ventured upon."

32. The confusion of the assembly is vividly portrayed. This verse is a continuance of the description of ver. 29. A vast multitude had assembled, with a vague idea of something wrong committed with reference to the goddess Diana; but the greater part were ignorant of its exact nature.

33. And they drew Alexander, etc. Literally, *Out of the crowd they brought forward Alexander, the Jews urging him along*. Calvin, Meyer, and some others suppose him to have been a Christian, whom the Jews wished to expose to the fury of the mob, and so turn away their anger from the other Jews. But it is more natural with Neander, Hackett, and others to regard him as a Jew, perhaps an orator, who would disclaim any participation of the Jews in Paul's proceedings. The Jews knew that they were liable to be confounded with Christians, and they would naturally wish to explain that Paul and his companions were apostates from the Jewish faith. Some suppose this to have been "Alexander, the coppersmith," who much later did Paul much evil (1 Tim. 1 : 20 ; 2 Tim. 4 : 14), and that his trade led him into certain relations with Demetrius and his craftsmen. But this is doubtful, as the name was common. **And would have made his defence**—rather, *a defence for himself and his people*.

34. When they knew—or perceived—that he was a Jew, from his looks, and perhaps from words he was beginning to utter, Gentile hatred and prejudice at once influenced the whole multitude. They recognized a Jew at once as opposed to idol-worship, and probably did not closely discriminate between Jews and Christians. A continuous cry for about the space of two hours went up, **Great is Diana of the Ephesians**. This was not only an expression of loyalty, but an act of worship, which accorded with Oriental and heathenish customs. (Matt. 6 : 7.) Compare the repetitions of the prophets of Baal in 1 Kings 18 : 26. Mohammedans and the worshipers of Brahma in India often spend the entire day in uttering such repetitions.

35 And when the townclerk had appeased the people, he said, *Ye men of Ephesus, what man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana, and of the image which fell down from Jupiter?*
 36 Seeing then that these things cannot be

spoken against, ye ought to be quiet, and
 37 ^dto do nothing rashly. For ye have brought hither these men, which are neither robbers of churches, nor yet
 38 blasphemers of your goddess. Wherefore if Demetrius, and the craftsmen which are with him, have a matter against any

^d Prov. 25 : 8.

35. And when, etc. *But the town clerk having quieted the multitude. The town clerk, or secretary of the city, kept the records of the public assemblages, attended to letters addressed to the city, and was the guardian of its public documents and archives. The inscriptions in Mr. Wood's Ephesus make mention of two town clerks, one of the senate, and one of the popular assembly. (Theatre, pp. 16, 44.) The office of town clerk appears to have been one of great importance and influence. Sometimes he was invested with the dignity of high priest of the goddess. He was ex-officio president of the assembly. He said—his speech is candid and shows great tact. He appeals to them, that such excitement is unbecoming the Ephesians, who were above all suspicion in their devotion to the goddess Diana (this verse and the next). He affirms that nothing can be proved against these men (ver. 37), that this course and excitement was unnecessary, for the courts were open to Demetrius and his craftsmen (ver. 38, 39), and that they were liable to be called to an account by the Roman authorities. (Ver. 40.) The city of the Ephesians is a worshipper, or temple-keeper. Literally a temple-sweeper, one who sweeps and cleanses the temple, and hence one who keeps and adorns it. It became an honorary title, a temple-keeper, which Ephesus was proud to receive and claim, as the guardian of the temple and worship of Diana. Among the inscriptions of Mr. Wood at Ephesus is one which speaks of an assembly of the temple-keepers. (Theatre, p. 3.) The title first appeared on the coins of Ephesus under the Emperor Nero, who entered upon his reign in the autumn of A. D. 54. If these coins had been recently issued, the reference to this title would be the more significant and emphatic. And of the image which*

fell down from Jupiter—that is, from heaven. Like many other venerated idols of the pagan world, it was believed to have fallen down from the sky. Possibly the origin of such legends may have arisen from the fall of meteoric stones. The reference here is to the wooden image of Diana, which was a rude, many-breasted female figure, ending below the breasts in a mummy-like pillar, curiously carved with symbols of bees, grain, and flowers.

36. Such being the case, ye ought, it is your moral duty, to be quiet, exercising self-control, and to do nothing rashly or precipitately.

37. For, implying that they had acted rashly, and introducing the reason for such an implication. Neither robbers of churches, rather, of temples. They were not spoilers of temples, and thus guilty of sacrilege. Nor yet blasphemers of your goddess—or, according to some old manuscripts, *our goddess*. From this we may learn how wisely and quietly Paul had done his work at Ephesus. He did not deal in ridicule or in violent denunciations, but taught the truth positively, and thus undermined idolatry. He doubtless exercised a winning and graceful courtesy, and a care for the feelings of others.

38. Wherefore, etc. Accordingly, since these men are neither blasphemers nor guilty of sacrilege, **if Demetrius and the others have a matter against any man, the law is open, literally, the court-days are kept.** Perhaps, as some suppose, the courts were in session. Ephesus was one of those towns where Roman officials held court. Being also a free city, it had its local courts and magistrates. The courts were held in the *agora*, or forum, which was near the great theatre. **And there are deputies—rather, proconsuls, Ephe-**

man, the law is open, and there are deputies; let them implead one another. But if ye inquire anything concerning other matters, it shall be determined in a lawful assembly. For we are in danger to

be called in question for this day's uproar, there being no cause whereby we may give an account of this concourse. 41 And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly.

sus being a senatorial province. (See on 13:7.) There was usually but one proconsul at a time. Hence, some suppose the plural here includes the judges or assistants appointed by him for the trial of cases. The term, however, may be used in a general sense, referring to the whole class. But in the first year of Nero, the proconsul Silarius was poisoned by Celes and Helius, who held the office together till a successor should be appointed. As Celes did not return to Rome till A. D. 57, it has been conjectured that they were now exercising proconsular authority. *Let them implead one another*—*let them accuse*, bring a charge one against the other, or plead against one another. Notice how prudently the town clerk refrains from naming Paul or any of his companions.

39. But if ye inquire, etc. If your inquiry has reference to other matters than those under the jurisdiction of the court, **it shall be determined or settled in the lawful or regular assembly.** This implies that the present gathering was irregular and unlawful. The word used for *assembly* here and in ver. 41 is the one usually translated *church*. (See on 5:11.) Among the Greeks the word was applied to an assembly of the people convened for the purpose of deliberating on public matters. This assembly held an important place at Ephesus. It had three stated meetings every month. It could also be convoked by the magistrate of the city. An inscription, found in this very theatre, speaks of the lawful or regular assembly. Private grievances could be laid before the courts; matters which concern the public should be brought before the lawful or regular assembly. Thus there was no justification for this tumultuous concourse.

40. Finally, the town clerk reminds them that they had criminally exposed themselves to punishment from the Roman government, which did not tolerate riotous assemblages in the provinces, and punished the rioters with

death. **For we are in danger to be called in question, or accused, for this day's uproar, or riot** before the Roman Senate and Roman officials. The liberties of their *free* city might in consequence be forfeited. **There being no cause;** and they could give no justifiable **account of this concourse.** Their danger was not merely in being accused, but in being unable to defend themselves.

41. When he had thus spoken—adroitly, firmly, and authoritatively—**he dismissed the assembly—**implying that the tumult was quelled, and the people having been brought to proper calmness and consideration, were quietly dispersed.

Many infer from the presence of the Asiarchs (ver. 31) at Ephesus that the riot took place in the Artemesion month (parts of April and May), in which the Ephesian games were celebrated in honor of Diana. This, however, is not a necessary inference; for Asiarchs would be present at the autumnal election; and doubtless some of them who had received the honor and bore the title resided at Ephesus, and thus had the better opportunity of knowing Paul. (Ver. 31.) See on ver. 22, last paragraph.

Soon after this riot Paul leaves Ephesus, having completed three years labor there. (20:1, 31.) In some respects this had been his most successful mission. He had gathered a strong church, made up of a membership of well-developed Christians. At Corinth the church was composed largely of those who needed milk suited for babes, rather than solid food fitted for men of full age. (1 Cor. 3:1, 2.) But at Ephesus he could declare the whole counsel of God (ver. 27), and speak wisdom among them, as growing up into the fullness of the stature of Christian manhood. (1 Cor. 2:6; Eph. 3:10; 4:13.) His Epistle to the Ephesians, written nearly six years later, bears testimony to the same truth. It is one of the profoundest books ever written; yet the Ephesians were ex-

pected to understand it. This shows the proficiency which his converts had attained under his preaching.

PRACTICAL REMARKS.

1. He who would save souls must seek after souls. (Ver. 1; John 1: 41; Luke 5: 10.)

2. True religion may be connected with a very imperfect experience. There will, however, be a readiness to embrace the truth when presented. (Ver. 2; 10: 34, 35.)

3. The baptism of John demanded repentance and faith in the Messiah, and thus it was substantially the same as that practiced by the apostles. (Ver. 3, 4; Mark 1: 4; John 1: 15, 21-24.)

4. There are instances where baptism should be repeated; for example, when it has been administered to an infant, or to an unconverted person, or when the divinely appointed formula has been omitted. (Ver. 4; Matt. 28: 19.)

5. The supernatural gifts of the Spirit had their place and uses in the beginning of the Gospel Dispensation. (Ver. 5; 1 Cor. 14: 22.)

6. The presence of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, is the privilege of all believers. (Ver. 6; Luke 11: 13; John 14: 16.)

7. We should strive to produce conviction in the minds of men regarding the things of the kingdom. (Ver. 8; Col. 1: 28.)

8. Religious disputation is generally vain and unprofitable. (Ver. 8, 9; 1 Tim. 6: 4; 2 Tim. 2: 23.)

9. Churches should be organized both for holding forth the truth, and as a protest against error. (Ver. 9; 1 Tim. 3: 15; Rev. 2: 13.)

10. Continued and persevering labor in one place repays the Christian worker. (Ver. 10; 18: 10.)

11. Good men have ever been ready to refer all miraculous power which may have attended them to God. (Ver. 11; Ps. 62: 11.)

12. The great miracles which God wrought through the handkerchiefs and aprons of Paul do not justify the worship of the relics of the saints. (Ver. 12.)

13. It is one of the evidences of Christianity that it has its counterfeits. (Ver. 13; 2 Cor. 11: 13-15.)

14. They who would do effective work for Christ must have a personal and experi-

mental knowledge of him. (Ver. 14; 2 Peter 1: 8, 9.)

15. Hypocrites and pretenders in Christ's kingdom will sooner or later manifest their real characters. (Ver. 15; 2 Peter 2: 1-3.)

16. Evil spirits are stronger than wicked men; but Christ is stronger than the Devil and his hosts. (Ver. 16; Luke 11: 20-22.)

17. Results show that there is a difference between Christ's true servants and impostors. (Ver. 17; Mal. 3: 18.)

18. One of the evidences of a renewed heart is the confessing and the forsaking of sin. (Ver. 18; Prov. 28: 13; Rom. 10: 10.)

19. When one is converted, if he has been engaged in a wicked business, he should renounce and forsake it, whatever pecuniary sacrifice it may cost. (Ver. 19; Eph. 5: 11.)

20. The advance of Christ's cause is seen, not only in the number of adherents, but in the changes in the heart and life of his followers. (Ver. 20; Eph. 2: 1-7.)

21. We should ever be purposing new achievements for Christ. (Ver. 21; Rom. 1: 13-15.)

22. We should plan to do good through others as well as by our own personal efforts. (Ver. 22; Luke 10: 1, 16.)

23. Pure Christianity will cause a stir in a wicked world. (Ver. 23; Matt. 10: 34-37.)

24. Demetrius is a type of those religionists whose zeal arises from their love of gain. (Ver. 24; 16: 20, 21; 1 Tim. 6: 9.)

25. A selfish religion is false and will ruin the soul. (Ver. 25-27; Matt. 16: 24-29.)

26. Blinded zeal and prejudice rather prefer clamor to argument. (Ver. 27-29; Luke 28: 20-23.)

27. A persecuting spirit is an element of false religion. (Ver. 29; 1 John 3: 10-12.)

28. Our zeal may sometimes go beyond prudence. At such times thoughtful friends are a great aid and blessing. (Ver. 30, 31.)

29. God is the author of order; but sin and sinners bring confusion. (Ver. 32-34; 1 Cor. 14: 33; James 3: 16.)

30. Prudent and courteous speech is more effective than violence and force. (Ver. 35-41.)

31. The preacher should be moderate in controversy. Hard names and offensive personalities do evil rather than good. (Ver. 37; Titus 3: 1, 2.)

32. Governments have their proper func-

Again visits Macedonia and Greece; returns through Macedonia to Troas and Miletus on the way to Syria.

20 AND after the uproar was ceased, Paul

called unto him the disciples, and embraced them, and departed for to go into Macedonia.

* ch. 19 : 21 ; 2 Cor. 2 : 12, 13 ; 1 Tim. 1 : 3.

tions and should be used accordingly. (Ver. 38, 39 : Rom. 13 : 4.)

33. Roman law aided the progress of the gospel. (Ver. 38, 39 ; 16 : 38, 39 ; 18 : 14, 15.)

34. They who raise tumults should be held strictly accountable to law. (Ver. 40.)

35 There was the regular assembly at Ephesus according to law, and an irregular one contrary to law . . . So there is the regular assembly (*church*) of Christ, of which he is the Head, organized according to the gospel, made up of those who believe on him, are baptized in his name, and are united and covenanted together to do his will. (Ver. 39, 41.)

Ch. 20 : In this chapter Luke continues the account of Paul's third missionary tour. Leaving Ephesus, Paul revisits northern and southern Greece, and returns through Macedonia to Troas on his way to Jerusalem. From Troas he sails down the Ægean Sea by Ephesus, to Miletus, where he meets the pastors of the Ephesian church, and takes leave of them in an impressive address and with prayer.

1-12. PAUL REVISITS MACEDONIA AND GREECE. SPENDS A WEEK IN TROAS. (2 Cor. 1 : 15, 16 ; 2 : 12, 13 ; 7 : 5, 6 ; 12 : 14 ; 13 : 1 ; Rom. 15 : 18, 19, 25, 26 ; 16 : 1, 21-23.) Paul leaves Ephesus in the summer or autumn of A. D. 57, spends the autumn and winter in Macedonia, and Greece, leaving Corinth and reaching Philippi just before the Passover week, A. D. 58.

1. After the uproar was ceased. This note of the time is indefinite. There is no evidence that the tumult hastened his departure. Several days may have intervened. The narrative is brief and passes over time rapidly. **Called unto him the disciples,** some of the oldest and best manuscripts add, *exhorted them.* **Embraced them—gave them a parting salutation.** **And departed.** It has been very commonly supposed that this was soon after Pentecost (1 Cor. 16 : 8), and in the month

of May, which was the Artemesion month. (See on 19 : 22.) But among the great number of craftsmen and workmen, and in the large city of Ephesus, a tumult could be raised at any time. Asiarchs (19 : 31) would be present at the autumnal election, as well as in May, and some doubtless resided at Ephesus. (See on 19 : 41.) There are several reasons for believing that Paul continued at Ephesus longer than Pentecost. 1. After writing his First Epistle to the Corinthians a great "affliction befell" him (2 Cor. 1 : 8), which appears to have been a severe illness, possibly his chronic malady or bodily infirmity, which threatened his life. (2 Cor. 1 : 9, 10 ; 11 : 23 ; 12 : 7, 9.) Such a severe attack would detain him at Ephesus longer than he expected. 2. Such detentions were not uncommon in Paul's ministry. (Gal. 4 : 13, 14 ; 1 Thess. 2 : 17 ; 18 ; 3 : 1 ; Rom. 1 : 13 ; 15 : 22, 23 ; 2 Cor. 1 : 15-17, 23.) 3. About the time of writing his First Epistle to the Corinthians, Paul sends Timothy to them by way of Macedonia. (1 Cor. 4 : 17 ; 16 : 10.) After doing this he returned to Philippi. (2 Cor. 1 : 1.) This would rather indicate that it was some time after Pentecost when Paul found him there.

4. Titus is sent later to Corinth (2 Cor. 2 : 12, 13 ; 7 : 5, 6), very likely after Paul had received from Timothy news direct from Corinth, regarding the church. This would probably be as late as Pentecost. He is sent and Paul delays, so that he may not come to them "in sorrow." (2 Cor. 2 : 1.) 5. The statement that Paul "spent three months in Greece" seems to imply that this was the longest time that he spent in any one country during the somewhat rapid journey after leaving Ephesus. (Ver. 2-6.) If so, then Paul must have been in Macedonia less than three months. Now Paul left Corinth about March 1, A. D. 58, in order to reach Philippi at the Passover of that year, March 27. (Ver. 3, 5, 6.) Allowing then a month in going from Ephesus to Philippi, two months in Macedonia, three months in Greece, a

2 And when he had gone over those parts, and had given them much exhortation,

3 he came into Greece, and there abode three months.

f ch. 19 : 21.

month or at most two months for traveling to and from Greece, we have seven or eight months from Paul's departure from Ephesus to his departure from Philippi for Jerusalem. Reckoning backward from March 27, A. D. 58, we reach about August 1, or September 1, A. D. 57. (See on ver. 31.) (See a fuller discussion in *Harmonic Arrangement*, pp. 226-230.)

To go into Macedonia. Luke merely states the fact. Paul in his Second Epistle to the Corinthians gives some particulars. From Ephesus Paul went direct to Troas, whether by land or sea, we are not told. (2 Cor. 2 : 12.) Here he found "a door opened to him in the Lord;" but so great was his disappointment in not finding Titus with news from Corinth, that he could not remain long to preach, but hastened into Macedonia to meet him. (2 Cor. 2 : 13.) Having come into Macedonia, he was still in great anxiety and affliction (2 Cor. 7 : 5), but he is soon after relieved and filled with joy, by the long expected arrival of Titus with good news from Corinth. (2 Cor. 7 : 7.) This coming probably occurred at Philippi, and there Paul wrote his Second Epistle to the Corinthians, in the autumn of A. D. 57. On *Macedonia*, see on 16 : 9. While in Macedonia he probably visited the churches at Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea, and extended his labors into the western part of Macedonia unto the boundaries of Illyricum. (Rom. 15 : 18, 19.) He was probably accompanied by two Ephesians, Tychicus and Trophimus. (Ver. 4.)

2. When he had gone over those parts or regions—as just noted in the preceding verse. This preaching excursion extending "round about even unto Illyricum" (Rom. 15 : 19) affords a striking contact of the Acts and Paul's epistle, and is another of the many confirmations of the accuracy of Luke. **Had given them**—that is, the disciples in all that region—**much exhortation.** **He came into Greece**—meaning the province of Achaia, to distinguish it from Mace-

donia. (See on 18 : 12.) He probably preached the gospel on his way to Corinth (2 Cor. 10 : 16), and made preaching excursions into the surrounding parts of Achaia, with his headquarters at Corinth. The sentence should end with this verse.

3. And there abode, etc. Rather, *And when he had stayed three months.* The winter was thus spent in Achaia, probably most of the time at Corinth. It was during this time that the Epistle to the Romans was written, or completed in its present form. This epistle, the most systematic, and doctrinally the most complete, of all the epistles, was probably the result of long thought. As he had long proposed to visit Rome, so he may have had this in long preparation. The Epistle to the Galatians and the Second to the Corinthians indicate impulsive and quick writing; but the Epistle to the Romans bears marks of deliberation both in structure and composition. Tertius acted as amanuensis. (Rom. 16 : 22.) It was sent by Phoebe, a deaconess of the church at Cenchrea, in the spring of A. D. 58, about this time when Paul was returning to Macedonia. (Rom. 16 : 1.) On this journey to Jerusalem Paul takes with him the contributions from the Christians of Macedonia and Achaia to the poor brethren of Judea. (Rom. 15 : 23-28; 1 Cor. 16 : 2-1; 2 Cor. 8 : 6-11; Acts. 24 : 17.) It has been noted by Wordsworth that no mention is made of this collection in the Epistle to the Galatians, which is an indication that the latter was written before the two Epistles to the Corinthians. The request that he should remember the poor which he was forward to do (Gal 2 : 10), looked backward to 11 : 29, 30, and doubtless forward to the collections which he took upon this journey. (24 : 17.)

The Jews laid wait for him, or a plot (9 : 24) was laid for him by the Jews, at the end of three months. What this plot was is unknown. Perhaps it was to waylay him on his way to the ship. (See 23 : 12; 2 Cor. 11 : 32.) This led Paul to change from the direct

And ^a when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria, he ⁴ posed to return through Macedonia. And there accompanied him into Asia ^b Sopater of Berea. And of the Thessalonians, ^c Aristarchus and Secundus; and ^d Gaius of Derbe, and ^e Timotheus; and of Asia,

⁵ ^m Tychicus and ⁿ Trophimus: these going ⁶ before tarried for us at Troas. And we sailed away from Philippi after ^o the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them ^p to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days.

⁷ And upon ^q the first day of the week,

^s ch. 9: 23; 25: 3; 2 Cor. 11: 26. ^h Rom. 16: 21. ⁱ ch. 19: 29; 27: 2; Col. 4: 10. ^k ch. 19: 29. ^l ch. 16: 1. ^m Eph. 6: 21; Col. 4: 7; 2 Tim. 4: 12; Titus 3: 12. ⁿ ch. 21: 29; 2 Tim. 4: 20. ^o Exod. 12: 14, 15; 23: 15. ^p ch. 16: 8; 2 Cor. 2: 12; 2 Tim. 4: 13. ^q Rev. 1: 10.

route to Syria to a circuitous one through Macedonia. This also accounts for the haste in his journey. (Ver. 16, etc.)

4. And there accompanied him—as his associates and attendants, forming perhaps a kind of body-guard. **Into Asia** is omitted by many ancient authorities. Some may have gone no further; others went with him to Jerusalem. See below. **Sopater of Berea.** The oldest and best manuscripts read, *the son of Pyrrhus*, perhaps to distinguish him from Sosipater of Rom. 16: 21, a different form of the same name. (On Berea, see 17: 10.) **Aristarchus**—mentioned in 19: 29, which see. **Secundus**—not mentioned elsewhere in the New Testament. **Gaius of Derbe.** (See on 14: 20.) He is to be distinguished from Gaius of Macedonia mentioned in 19: 29. But was perhaps the one to whom John wrote his Third Epistle. **Timotheus.** (See on 16: 1, 2.) **Tychicus** is mentioned in Eph. 6: 21; Col. 4: 7; Titus. 3: 12; and 2 Tim. 4: 12, from which it appears that he was one of Paul's most faithful companions and fellow-laborers, and the bearer of at least two of his epistles. He probably accompanied Paul to Jerusalem. **Trophimus** became the innocent occasion of Paul's arrest at Jerusalem (21: 29), and much later is mentioned in 2 Tim. 4: 20, as having been left sick at Miletus. It has been thought that Tychicus and Trophimus were the two brethren who, with Titus, managed the collection for the poor saints at Jerusalem. (2 Cor. 8: 16-24.) It is very probable that the seven brethren here named were representatives of Gentile churches, recently formed in Asia and Europe, and the bearers of contributions. (1 Cor. 16: 3, 4.)

5. These going before, or having gone forward, tarried or were waiting for us at Troas. From the use of the first person it is evident that Luke rejoins Paul at Philippi (ver. 6), where he had been left six years before. (See on 16: 10, 40.) During this period Luke probably labored at Philippi and its vicinity. The seven brethren mentioned in the preceding verse appear to have gone forward to Troas from Philippi. For at the latter city Paul tarried with Luke. (Ver. 6.) This verse implies that at some point they preceded him to Troas; and the mention of sailing away from Philippi in the next verse, naturally suggests that city as the place of Paul's stopping, and their going forward.

After the days of unleavened bread—the Passover festival lasting a week. This is used as a chronological note of time. It seems probable that Paul tarried at Philippi not merely for the observance of the Passover; but that Luke might arrange and prepare for going with him. From this point to the end of the Acts Luke appears as a companion of Paul. The minuteness in the narrative indicates his presence as an eye-witness. **To Troas in five days**—six years before this Paul had made the voyage in the opposite direction in two days. (16: 11.) Less favorable winds doubtless account for the difference of time. The Passover of A. D. 58 began on March 27. We may suppose that on April 4, the day following the eighth day of the feast, Paul sails from Philippi, and in five days, on April 8, perhaps late in the day, he arrives at Troas. Here he remains a week.

7. Upon the first day of the week, etc. We have here a recognition of a practice which began imme-

when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow: and con-

tinued his speech until midnight. And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered to-

* ch. 2 : 42, 46 ; 1 Cor. 10 : 16 ; 11 : 20, etc.

* ch. 1 : 13.

diately after the resurrection, of meeting for celebrating the Lord's Supper and other religious services. (John 20 : 19, 26 ; Luke 24 : 35.) On the day our Lord rose from the dead he appeared on five different occasions. After eight days, that is, on the next first day of the week, he again appeared to the eleven. It thus became a day of holy joy and thanksgiving, and memorable to the disciples. What associations clustered around that day, and how natural and fitting that each returning first day should be hallowed with worship and the breaking of bread. And now, twenty-eight years later, Paul meets the worshiping disciples at Troas on the first day of the week. The religious services and the breaking of bread at that time could not have been accidental. They indicate a custom among the disciples. About a year before this Paul enjoined a practice of special religious duties on the first day of the week. (1 Cor. 16 : 1, 2.) Many years later John speaks of the Lord's Day (Rev. 1 : 10), which refers not to the seventh day, for the word Sabbath was applied to that day, but most naturally to the first day of the week, as the one on which the Lord rose from the dead. Pliny, in his letter to Trajan, says that Christians were wont to meet on a certain day before daylight for divine worship. On this occasion it seems that they met before sunset; and a religious service preceded the breaking of bread. (Ver. 11.) Some suppose that Paul held this service on Saturday evening, that being the beginning of the first day of the week, according to the Jewish reckoning of the day, and that he resumed his journey on Sunday morning. It is a matter of small importance whether the first day of the week commenced at sunset Saturday, or a few hours later at midnight. It is far more important to note here a trace of the observance of Lord's Day among disciples at that early day. "Since the suffering of Christ appeared as the central point of all religious experience

and life, since his resurrection was considered as the foundation of all Christian joy and hope, it was natural that the communion of the church should have specially distinguished the day with which the memory of that event had connected itself." (NEANDER.) "As Luke had mingled so much with foreign nations and was writing for Gentile readers, he would be very apt to designate the time in accordance with their practice; so that his evening or night of *the first day of the week* would be the end of the Christian Sabbath, and the morning of his departure that of Monday." (DR. HACKETT.) The Epistle of Barnabas, a teacher of Alexandria, who wrote in the first half of the second century; Justin Martyr, about A. D. 140; Dionysius, A. D. 170; Irenæus, A. D. 180; Clement of Alexandria, A. D. 196; Tertullian, A. D. 200; Origen, A. D. 230, and Cyprian, A. D. 250, all give their testimony to Lord's Day observances. (See on Mark 16 : 2.) The Lord's Day gradually supplanted the Jewish Sabbath, though, for a time, both were observed. The zealots for the law appear to have demanded that Gentile Christians should observe the Jewish Sabbath as well as other Jewish festivals, against which Paul gave his advice. (Col. 2 : 16. See Rom. 14 : 5.) **Ready to depart on the morrow.** As the incidents here related were occurring on the first day of the week it is most natural to refer *the morrow* to Monday, the second day of the week, April 17. Instead of **disciples**, the best manuscripts have *we*.

8. There were many lights, or lamps. The minute description of this verse indicates the language of an eyewitness. These lights enabled the audience to see Eutychus distinctly. (Ver. 9.) **In the upper chamber**—in Greek houses commonly used for company and feasts, which, in this case, was "the third loft," or *story*. (Ver. 9.) Instead of **they**, the best manuscripts read, **where we were gathered together**.

9 **gether.** And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep: and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and 10 was taken up dead. And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing *him* said, ^a **Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in** 11 **him.** When he therefore was come up

again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break 12 of day, so he departed. And they brought the young man alive, and were not a little comforted.

13 **And we went before to ship, and sailed** unto Assos, there intending to take in Paul: for so had he appointed, minding

^a Matt. 9: 24.

9. **There sat in a window**—on the window sill, perhaps with seats extending over the street or court. The window was not of glass, but with a wooden shutter which would be open on account of heat, and to obtain fresh air. The night was dark; for at the Passover the moon was full (ver. 6), and now rose after midnight as a faint crescent. **A certain young man**—called a boy in ver. 12. He was a youth, but these terms do not determine his age. **Being fallen**, or *borne down with a deep sleep*, produced in part, doubtless, by the warmth of the room. **And as Paul was long preaching**, or *discoursed yet longer than midnight*. (Ver. 7.) **He sunk down**, or *was borne down with sleep*—he became relaxed, lost his balance, and, as a consequence, fell from the third loft, or story. **And was taken up dead.** Notice that Eutychus is not merely taken up for dead, but *really dead*, and this is recorded by Luke, the physician, who was present, and knew all the particulars. (See on ver. 12.)

10. **Paul went down**—by the staircase, which was usually outside of an Eastern house. **Fell on him, embracing him.** Similar to what Elijah (1 Kings 17: 21) and Elisha (2 Kings 4: 34) did, and doubtless like them, accompanying his action with prayer. **Trouble not yourselves.** *Be not distressed.* Compare our Lord's words in the house of Jairus. (Luke 8: 52, 53.) **For his life is in him.** He saw the signs of life, and felt returning motions as he clasped and held him in his arms.

11. **When he therefore was come up again**—better, *And having gone up*. Paul's calmness had its proper effect on the congregation. **And had broken bread**—rather, *the bread*. Paul proceeded to administer the Lord's Supper, which had

been delayed by the fall of Eutychus. "It is worthy of notice that whatever kind of bread is eaten, whether the large soft loaf, or the thin cake, it is never cut with a knife, but *broken* with the hand. Hence the expression so common in the Scripture, as well as in other Eastern writings, to 'break bread,' that is, to eat." (DR. H. VAN LENSEN, *Bible Lands*, p. 90.) **And eaten**—another act, after the Lord's Supper. They partook of a more substantial repast, perhaps of the love feast. **And talked a long while** with them. This was not formal preaching, but social intercourse, connected with the meal and afterward. **And departed** on foot to Assos, a distance of twenty miles. (Ver. 13, 14.)

12. **And they brought the young man alive**, *the lad living*, which implies that he had been dead. (Ver. 9.) It would seem that he was brought up into the congregation before it finally broke up, and probably before Paul's departure.

13-18. **PAUL GOES ON FOOT TO ASSOS, THEN BY SEA TO MILETUS, WHERE HE GAVE A PARTING ADDRESS TO THE ELDERS OF THE EPHESIAN CHURCH.** (Rom. 15: 30-32; 1 Cor. 4: 11, 12; Ps. 74: 2.) This embraces a period of about one week.

13. **And**—rather, *But we went before to the ship*—describing what Luke and the rest did without Paul. They probably left very early in the morning, immediately after the restoring of Eutychus. **And sailed unto Assos**—rather, *embarked for Assos*, a town on the coast of Mysia, twenty miles by land south of Troas, but about forty miles by sea. It was doubtless necessary for the ship to start thus early, but Paul would take leave of his brethren at Troas in a less hurried manner, and perhaps wished to be

14 himself to go afoot. And when he met with us at Assos, we took him in, and 15 came to Mitylene. And we sailed thence, and came the next *day* over against Chios. And the next *day* we arrived at Samos, and tarried at Trogyllium; and the next

16 *day* we came to* Miletus. For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia: for *⁊* he hastened, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem *⁊* the day of Pentecost.

* 2 Tim. 4 : 20.

⁊ ch. 18 : 21 ; 19 : 21.

* 1 Cor. 16 : 8.

alone in meditation and prayer. There was a good Roman road from Troas passing through Assos. The journey could be performed in five hours; and if Paul left Troas at seven o'clock, he could reach Assos about noon.

14. They sailed around Cape Leetum, and when they reached Assos, Paul met them and was taken into the ship, and they sail to Mitylene, the capital city of the island Lesbos, about thirty miles southward. It was famed for its beautiful situation and its magnificent buildings. Its modern name is Castro. A narrow strait separates the island Lesbos from Asia Minor. Here they pass the night. Being a coasting voyage, each night was spent in some harbor. The winds must have been very favorable to have accomplished so long a voyage in a single day.

15. We came the next or following day, on Tuesday, April 18, according to our reckoning. (See on ver. 6, 7.) Over against Chios, the modern island Scio, about five miles distant from the mainland. It was famous for its beauty, and about forty miles south of Mitylene. The language implies that they did not put into the harbor, but lay off at some distance, in the shelter of the roadstead, and thus passed the night. The ship may have been becalmed in the afternoon. **The next day they arrived at or touched, Samos,** an island bearing still the same name, about fifty miles south-east of Chios. It was separated by a narrow strait from the mainland. The island had been famous in Greek history. **And tarried at Trogyllium,** about a mile across the channel on the mainland. They had passed the bay below Ephesus, and were now nearer Ephesus than at Miletus. For some unknown reason Paul chooses the latter place for meeting the Ephesian elders. Perhaps on account of the better harbor, and the delay of the ship for business.

But the words, *And tarried at Trogyllium*, are not found in the oldest manuscripts, and are omitted in the Revised Version. **And the next day we came to Miletus,** a few miles south of Trogyllium, a city more ancient than Ephesus, but in Paul's day outstripped in wealth and grandeur by the latter city. It was on the coast of Caria, and about twenty-eight miles south of Ephesus. It is now a swamp with a few ruins, some distance from the sea. It was some distance in Paul's time. (Ver. 38.) Here they arrive, according to our reckoning, on Thursday, April 20, perhaps early in the afternoon, and remained a few days.

16. This verse gives the reason why Paul sailed past Ephesus, and delayed at Miletus. It seems evident that he had some control of the ship. **Because he would not,** etc.—*that he might not spend time in the province of Asia.* In the large church at Ephesus there would naturally arise many causes of delay. Besides, he might meet hostility from certain quarters, to allay which would consume time. (1 Cor. 16:8.) *He had determined,* and was hastening, if possible, to be at Jerusalem on Pentecost. About twenty-three of the fifty days, between the Passover and Pentecost, had already gone when he arrived at Miletus. Many reasons may have made him anxious to be at **Pentecost.** (See on 2:1.) His presence would be pleasing to Jewish Christians. (21:20.) He would also meet with many foreign Jews who had come to the great feast; and also the presentation at this time of the gifts from the Gentile churches would give great publicity to the interest of Gentile Christians in their Jewish brethren. While there is not the least evidence of the Christian observance of Pentecost, at that early day believers would naturally feel an interest in it as the day when the Holy Spirit first descended upon Christians. (2:4.)

Paul's farewell address to the elders of the Ephesian church.

17 AND from Miletus he sent to Ephesus,

and called ^athe elders of the church.
18 And when they were come to him, he said unto them,

^a 1 Tim. 5 : 17; 1 Peter 5 : 1.

17. And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus. He arrived probably about Thursday, April 20. On the same day or the day following he could send a messenger to Ephesus, twenty-eight miles distant, for the elders of the church. These could arrive by or before Saturday night, so that Sunday, April 23, and perhaps a part of Saturday could be spent in social and religious services, closing with his farewell charge.

The elders of the church. These elders are called *overseers*, or *bishops*, in ver. 28. They were the pastors at Ephesus. The church was large, and having no house of worship, it had a number of meeting places for different portions of its members, and thus needed a plurality of elders to exercise oversight at their religious services and at other times. It is acknowledged by all that during the life time of Paul, and in the early churches, *elders* and *bishops* were the same. The title *elder* being essentially Jewish was the common designation in Jewish churches; and that of *bishop* or *overseer*, from an official title among the Greeks, was common among Gentile churches. (1 Tim. 3 : 1; Titus 1 : 7; 1 Peter 2 : 25; 5 : 2.) Jerome, who died A. D. 420, says: "Among the ancients bishops and presbyters are the same; for one is a term of dignity, the other of age."—*Epist.* LXIX.

There is no trace of a third order of the ministry, or of church officers, in the New Testament. In Phil. 1 : 1, written A. D. 62, "bishops and deacons" are mentioned in such a manner as to indicate only two classes of church officers, and exclusive of a third class. So also 1 Tim. 8 : 1-7, 8-15; 5 : 17-19, and Titus 1 : 5-7, unmistakably point to two classes exclusive of a third class, in A. D. 66. "The angels of the seven churches" (Rev. 1 : 20) probably meant the pastors, and in any event did not indicate a third class of a higher order of bishops. "It is the conception of a late age which represents Timothy as

bishop of Ephesus, and Titus as bishop of Crete." (Dr. J. B. LIGHTFOOT, *Phil.* p. 199.) Clement, of Rome, who wrote A. D. 90-100, makes no mention of a higher order of bishops in his epistle. But he speaks of appointing bishops and deacons, and indicates that bishops were the same as presbyters, or elders. Polycarp, of Smyrna, who was martyred at a very advanced age, about A. D. 156, uses the word *elder* as equivalent to bishop, in his epistle to the Philippians, chap. v and vi. "The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles," written, perhaps, about A. D. 120, speaks of the "bishops and deacons" (ch. xv), as if they were the only church officers, and gives no countenance to a third class, or to the least modified form of a church hierarchy. But intermediate between these two latter and Clement, lived Ignatius of Antioch, who, on his journey to Rome, where he suffered martyrdom, A. D. 116, is said to have written seven epistles, in which he speaks of bishops, elders, and deacons, and indicates the superiority of bishops over the other two orders. The value of these epistles is greatly lessened by their gross interpolations and possible forgeries. Dr. Lightfoot, however, lays great stress on them, and thinks that bishops of a higher order were recognized in Ephesus and Asia Minor early in the second century. But he admits that at that time bishops in this higher sense did not exist in Macedonia and Greece. It appears that early the churches, in both doctrine and practice, began to depart from the simplicity of the gospel. We can rest safely, therefore, only upon the teachings of the New Testament and upon apostolic authority and example. Paul foretold that many should fall away from the faith (1 Tim. 4 : 1), and that in the last days perilous times should come. (2 Tim. 3 : 1 f.) And John affirmed, "It is the last time; and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists." (1 John 2 : 18.)

Ye know, ^bfrom the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, serving the

Lord ^cwith all humility of mind, and ^dwith many tears, and ^etemptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of

^b 2 Cor. 1: 12; 1 Thess. 1: 5, 6.

^c 1 Cor. 15: 9, 10; 2 Cor. 12: 7-10.

^d See Luke 19: 41.

^e 2 Cor. 11: 23-30.

It is very probable that in some of the early churches one of the elders was selected to act as the leading pastor, like James at Jerusalem. (15: 13.)

If one became distinguished for wisdom, or discourse, or age, he might be chosen as a temporary head of the eldership, and subsequently regarded as the chief of the elders, and in a succeeding generation be accorded an official superiority, and styled the bishop, while the others would continue to be known as elders. Such a change doubtless occurred very soon after the apostolic age. Neander remarks (*Planting and Training*, p. 148) regarding apostolic churches: "We find among them no individual distinguished above the rest who presided as a *chief among equals*, though probably in the age immediately succeeding the apostolic, of which we have unfortunately so few authentic memorials, the practice was introduced of applying to such an one the name of bishop by way of distinction." Such a primitive bishop was strictly speaking the principal pastor of a church, and entirely different from the diocesan bishop that in due time followed. (See further on 11: 30.)

The New Testament no where recognizes sacerdotal or priestly functions in the Christian ministry. All believers are a "holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 2: 5.) Christ is our great High Priest, and all have equal access by faith through him. (Heb. 10: 19-23.) Dr. Lightfoot traces sacerdotalism to heathen rather than Jewish sources; and states that Tertullian, who died between A. D. 220 and 240, was the first to assert direct sacerdotal claims on behalf of the Christian ministry; and that Cyprian, who died A. D. 258, became the champion of undisguised sacerdotalism. He also says: "The only priests designated as such in the New Testament, are the saints, the members of the Christian brotherhood." (Phil. p. 184, f.)

18. He said unto them. This speech is remarkable for expressions and sentiments peculiar to Paul, which indicates the fact that Luke heard it and reported it. Paul first of all reminds them of the spirit and character of his ministry among them (ver. 18-21); refers to expected sufferings, and expresses the conviction that he will see their face no more. (Ver. 22-25.) He testifies to his own ministerial fidelity, and exhorts them to a like faithfulness and watchfulness. (Ver. 26-31.) Finally he commends them to God, and enforces generous and disinterested labor by reference to his own example, and a memorable saying of the Lord Jesus. (Ver. 32-35.)

Ye—emphatic, *Ye yourselves know.* Compare Samuel's appeal to Israel after the selection of Saul as king. (1 Sam. 12: 2-5.) Also Joshua's farewell addresses. (Josh. 23: 2, 3; 24: 15, 22.) **From the first day that I came into Asia.** Not only at Ephesus, which was the great centre of his Christian activity and missionary work, but elsewhere in the province, whither he had made preaching excursions. **After what manner I have been with you the whole time.** Paul appeals to his conduct from first to last. Compare Paul's appeal to the Thessalonians, 1 Thess. 1: 5; 2: 10.

19. Serving the Lord—with the devotedness of a servant or *slave*, claiming not to be his own, but wholly the Lord's. The expression is almost peculiar to Paul. (Rom. 12: 11; 14: 18; 16: 18; Col. 3: 24; 1 Thess. 1: 9.) **With all humility,** or *lowliness of mind.* The same expression is found in Phil. 2: 3 and Col. 3: 12. As a servant, neither refusing to do any kind of work for the Lord's sake, however menial or insignificant, nor attempting to lord it over God's heritage. (1 Peter 5: 3.) **And with many tears.** Omit *many*, according to the oldest authorities. *Tears* is used twice in this address (here and in ver. 31), and illustrated by example in ver. 37. (See 2 Cor. 2: 4; Phil. 3: 18.) **The tears in**

20 the Jews: and how ^fI kept back nothing that was profitable *unto you*, but have showed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, ^gtestifying both to the Jews, and also to the

Greeks, ^hrepentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

22 And now, behold, ⁱI go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: save

^f ver. 27; 1 Cor. 15: 3.

^g ch. 18: 5.

^h ch. 2: 38; Luke 24: 47.

ⁱ ch. 18: 5; 19: 21.

this verse are those of pain and suffering connected with temptations, or trials which befell him by the lying in wait, or plotting of the Jews. Luke makes no mention of a plot against Paul's life at Ephesus. The hostility of the Jews is alluded to in 19: 9; and their anxiety, at the tumult at Ephesus, to show that they had no sympathy with Paul. (19: 33.) Paul, however, mentions these plottings at Ephesus, doubtless similar to those at Damascus, Thessalonica, Corinth (ver. 3), and other cities; but it did not fall in with Luke's purpose to tell us concerning them. (See 1 Cor. 15: 31, 32; 16: 9.)

20. Paul still appeals to their recollection, **how**, negatively, he had exercised the utmost fidelity: *How I kept back nothing that was profitable, that I should not announce it to you.* Neither from fear, nor from any other cause had he *shrunk* from making known what was profitable or helpful, to their salvation. (1 Cor. 10: 33.) This sometimes necessitated rebuke and great plainness of speech, as well as encouragement, a work not always pleasant. *And teaching you publicly*—as in the synagogue three months, and two years in the schoolhouse of Tyrannus. (19: 8-10.) **And from house to house**—in private houses, in distinction from public gatherings. He thus not only taught those who came to hear him, but put forth personal efforts among the people, at their homes, talking to them individually, and holding private meetings for instruction. "Observe the qualification, *profitable to you*. What, as yet, they were unprepared for, he may have kept back till the time for presenting it should arrive. All Scripture is profitable, but not to all men at all times. (See John 16: 12; 1 Cor. 3: 1, 2.)" (ABBOTT.)

21. Testifying the necessity of repentance and faith to both Jews and Greeks. This was the sum and substance of what he taught as necessary and profitable. **Repentance toward**

God—by which we turn to God. (Ps. 51: 1; Luke 15: 18.) **And faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ**—by which we look to Christ, trust and accept him as a Saviour. (John. 14: 1; Acts 16: 31.) Some ancient manuscripts omit *Christ*. It is a fanciful interpretation which supposes that Paul enforced *repentance* as especially needed by Gentiles, and *faith* by Jews. Both were needful. True repentance and faith are inseparable. Compare Peter's address to the Jews on the Day of Pentecost. "Repent," etc. (2: 38.)

22. Paul now turns from the past to the future, and anticipates approaching trial. **I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem**—he refers to his own spirit which impelled and constrained him. *Bound*, as a matter of obligation or duty. He could not free himself from the impulse and the conviction to go. (See 17: 16.) In his own mind he was, as it were, a prisoner, impelled on to Jerusalem, where he was to be seized and imprisoned. The Holy Spirit is not referred to here; for he is mentioned in the next verse, and distinguished, as it seems, from Paul's spirit here. **Not knowing the things that shall befall me there.** Aside from the Holy Spirit he knew nothing of the future; neither had the Spirit revealed anything in particular as to what would happen to him at Jerusalem, but only in general intimations.

23. **Save that the Holy Spirit witnesseth.** The oldest manuscripts add to *me*. Either by direct revelation to himself, or by his personal experiences and afflictions (9: 23, 29: 13: 50: 14: 5, 19: 16: 23; 17: 5, 10, 13; 18: 12; 20: 3), or by prophets who were moved to warn him, such as the disciples at Tyre (21: 4) and Agabus at Cæsarea. (21: 11.) Probably the Spirit had testified to him regarding persecution in all these ways. **In every city**—from city to city, as he pursued his labors. **That bonds and afflictions await me**—at Jeru-

that ^k the Holy Spirit witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions ²⁴ abide me. But ^l none of these things move me, ^m neither count I my life dear unto myself, ⁿ so that I might finish my course with joy, ^o and the ministry,

which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify ^a the gospel of the grace of God. ²⁵ And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no ²⁶ more. Wherefore I take you to record

^k ch. 9: 16; 21: 4, 11. ^l ch. 21: 13; 2 Cor. 4: 8, 9, 16-18; 2 Tim. 1: 12. ^m Phil. 1: 20-23; 2: 17. ⁿ 2 Tim. 4: 7. ^o 2 Cor. 4: 1. ^p ch. 9: 15; Gal. 1: 1. ^a Rom. 3: 24-26.

saalem, whither I am going. A little before this Paul had written from Corinth to the Roman believers, asking their prayers "that he might be delivered from them who believed not in Judea," thus indicating his forebodings of persecution at Jerusalem. (Rom. 15: 20.) Paley rightly regards these two passages as incidentally and undesignedly confirming the truthfulness of each other. *Bonds* refers to the bodily restraints and imprisonments; and *afflictions*, to other additional sufferings, especially mental. (See Phil. 1: 17.) "Supposing to add affliction to my bonds," that is, mental suffering especially to bodily constraint.

24. There is some difference in the reading of this passage in the original. The oldest manuscripts leave out **neither count I**, and read, *But I hold my life of no account, as dear unto myself*. He was forgetful of himself in his devotion to Christ. "I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake." (2 Cor. 12: 10.) This devotedness of heart and life, Paul beautifully and strikingly expresses in Phil. 3: 7-15. **So that I may finish my course**. Paul views the Christian life as a race. The foot-race was a common Grecian game, which Paul loved to use as a figure. (13: 25; Phil. 2: 16, 17; 2 Tim. 4: 7.) **With joy** is wanting in many ancient authorities. Joy would surely come, but the accomplishment of his work was that which was uppermost in the apostle's thoughts. (Phil. 3: 13, 14.) **And the ministry which I have received**—rather, *which I received*, at my conversion, from the Lord. (1 Tim. 1: 12.) This ministry was his apostleship. (Rom. 1: 1; Gal. 1: 1.) His work and sufferings were both told to Ananias (9: 15, 16), and made known to Paul at the first (22: 15, 21; 26: 16-18.) **To testify the gospel, or**

good news of the grace of God—that God can and will be gracious, even to the chief of sinners who believe on Christ. Compare 1 Tim. 1: 12-16, in which Paul speaks of his call, experience, and work in the ministry, and of the gospel as "worthy of all acceptance."

25. Ye all, among whom, etc.—the elders whom he was addressing, both as individuals and as representatives of those, among whom he **had gone preaching the kingdom of God**. The oldest manuscripts omit *of God*. *The kingdom* was a brief way of designating the kingdom of Christ, or of God. (See on 1: 3, 8.) **Shall see my face no more**. He now expresses his deep conviction as in ver. 22. (See 26: 27.) It is probable that he visited Ephesus again after his first imprisonment at Rome. In his Epistle to Philemon (ver. 22), toward the end of that imprisonment, he expresses the hope and the intention of visiting Philemon, who was at Colosse; and later still, just before his martyrdom, he writes of leaving Trophimus sick at Miletus. We can hardly suppose that Paul would visit these places and not have gone to Ephesus. Some, therefore, emphasize the word *all* as though the apostle only meant that he should never see them all again. But such an interpretation is very improbable in the light of verses 37, 38. As Paul was thinking of visiting Rome, and from thence going far westward (Rom. 15: 24), with a heart burdened with forebodings of evil, his deep conviction at that moment was, that he would never see them again. Perhaps this presentiment would have become a reality at Jerusalem, or elsewhere, had it not been for the prayers of the Lord's people in his behalf. (Rom. 15: 20.) See how Paul feels four years later. (Phil. 1: 20, 25; 2: 24.)

26. Wherefore—in view of this

this day, that I *am* pure from the blood
27 of all *men*. For I have not shunned to
declare unto you all *the counsel* of God.
28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves,

and to *all* the flock, *over* the which the
Holy Spirit hath made you *overseers*, *to*
feed the church of God, *which* he hath
29 purchased with his own blood. For I

¹ ch. 18 : 6; Ezek. 33 : 5, 9. ² Luke 7 : 30. ³ 1 Cor. 9 : 27; 1 Tim. 4 : 16. ⁴ 1 Peter 5 :
2, 3. ⁵ 1 Cor. 12 : 8-11, 28-30. ⁶ 1 Peter 2 : 25, Gr. ⁷ Matt. 2 : 6, Gr. ⁸ 1 Peter 1 : 18 :
19; Rev. 5 : 9.

final parting, and close of his ministry
among them. **I take you to record**
—*I testify to you*, declare solemnly as
a witness before God. (See Eph. 4 : 17.)
This day—a strong expression, *This*
very day, the last we meet on earth.
I am pure—with a clear conscience
(23 : 1), guiltless of the destruction of
all, among whom I have labored
among you. (Ezek. 3 : 18. See on 18 : 6.)

27. For I have not shunned to
declare—however disagreeable the
message, he concealed, he dissembled
nothing. **All the counsel**, or *will*,
of God, respecting the salvation of
men, his offers of grace and mercy, and
especially regarding the nature, neces-
sity and duty of repentance and faith.
(Ver. 21.) God's purpose of mercy to the
Gentiles would also be included. (See
Eph. 3 : 2-11.) This verse implies much
in regard to the ability of his Ephesian
brethren to understand and receive the
gospel in its fullness.

28. Take heed therefore unto
yourselves—that ye be faithful. He
gives them prophetic exhortation and
warning. **And to all the flock**—the
discipleship (Luke 12 : 32; 1 Peter 5 : 2), that
they be kept and preserved from error.
Paul had faithfully discharged his
duty, and now he enforces the respon-
sibility on them. **Over which**—
rather, *in which*, as being themselves a
part of the flock and members of the
church, among whom they were to
labor. **The Holy Spirit hath made**
or set you as overseers; including doubt-
less the inward call, and perhaps di-
recting in the choice of them as over-
seers. (6 : 5; 13 : 2.) It is implied that
they had been appointed and set apart
to their office. Notice that these men
are here styled *overseers* or *bishops*,
who are called elders in ver. 17; on
which see. They were pastors or su-
perintendents. The church at Ephesus
had a plurality of pastors. We have
no account in apostolic days of a
bishop of a province, or a bishop hav-

ing a plurality of churches with their
pastors under him. **To feed**—*to*
shepherd—like a shepherd who not
only feeds, but tends, directs, and pro-
tects his flock. (John 21 : 15, 17; 1 Peter 5 :
2-4.)

The church of God, or of the
Lord—at Ephesus, in which they were
set as overseers. Of course, these elders
could not feed the so-called church
universal, nor the collective disciplesh-
ip throughout the world. In regard
to the reading in the original, the evi-
dences are divided between *God* and
Lord. The internal evidence favors
the reading, *God*. Paul is the only
writer in the New Testament who uses
the expression, *The church of God*.
He uses it eight times outside of this
passage. (1 Cor. 1 : 2; 10 : 32; 11 : 22; 15 : 9;
2 Cor. 2 : 1; Gal. 1 : 13; 1 Tim. 3 : 5, 15.) Three
times he uses the expression *churches*
of God. (1 Cor. 11 : 16; 1 Thess. 2 : 14; 2 Thess.
1 : 4.) The expression *churches of Christ*
occurs only once in his epistles (Rom.
16 : 16); and *church of the Lord*, or *church*
of Christ, does not occur once. So that
church of God is the usual expression
with Paul, and the one which he would
naturally use in extemporaneous ad-
dress. Among the critics, Tischendorf,
Meyer, Tregelles, Ezra Abbott, and
others decide for *Lord*; and Scrivener,
Alford, Westcott and Hort, and others
decide for *God*. **Which he hath**
purchased—rather, *which he*
purchased, as paid once for all. The verb
found here and in 1 Tim. 3 : 13, is not the
one commonly used for buying, and
means *to gain or acquire for one's self*,
and thus that which is thus gotten is
peculiarly one's own. **With his own**
blood—the price of redemption, the
sacrifice of suffering and death. (See
Rom. 3 : 25; 1 Cor. 6 : 20; Eph. 1 : 7, 14; 1 Peter 1 : 18,
19; 2 : 24.)

29. For I know this. The oldest
manuscripts have simply, *I know*.
After my departing. Paul does not
refer specially to his death, but to his

know this, that after my departing ^b shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not ^c sparing the flock. Also ^e of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after

31 them. Therefore watch, and remember, that ^d by the space of three years I ceased not ^e to warn every one night and day with tears.

^b Matt. 7 : 15; 2 Peter 2 : 1-3.

^c 2 Tim. 2 : 17, 18; 4 : 3, 4; 1 John 2 : 18, 19.

^d ch. 19 : 10.

^e Ezek. 3 : 17-20; Col. 1 : 28.

leaving them, with the conviction that they would see his face no more. (Ver. 25.) **Shall grievous, cruel wolves**—these represent, not persecutors, but false teachers. Jesus calls false prophets “ravens wolves.” (Matt. 7 : 15.) These **enter in among them** from without, **not sparing the flock**, the congregation of baptized believers at Ephesus. They were exposed to Judaizers and Gnostics. In the second and third chapters of Revelation we learn the terrible work of such false teachers at Ephesus, and in other churches in the province of Asia. There were the “Nicolaitans” “who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan” (Rev. 2 : 6, 9; 3 : 9); “some who hold the teaching of Balaam” (Rev. 2 : 14); “the woman Jezebel who calleth herself a prophetess,” teaching and seducing by pernicious and destructive doctrines. (Rev. 2 : 20.)

30. False teachers should also arise from among themselves, that is, not from the elders especially, but from the flock including the elders. They would speak **perverse things**, corrupt, and distorted doctrines. **To draw away**, or so as to draw away the disciples after them. Having departed from the truth and embraced false doctrines, they would use their utmost efforts to drag others after them. Thus they would divide believers into parties and factions, and lead into apostasy from the truth. About eight years after this Paul speaks of his own experience, “that all those in Asia turned away from me, of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes.” (2 Tim. 1 : 15.) He also refers to Hymenæus and Philetus,” “who erred concerning the truth.” (2 Tim. 2 : 17.) In his First Epistle to Timothy (1 : 20) he speaks of having delivered unto Satan, Hymenæus and Alexander. (See 2 Tim. 4 : 14.) Much later John, who lived at Ephesus, speaks of “Diotrephes, who loves to have the pre-emi-

nence.” (3 John 9.) And from Rev. 2 : 2-4, we learn that there were some at Ephesus who laid claim to apostolic authority, and that the church there, as a church, had left their first love. Ephesus became noted afterward as the seat of the Gnostic heresy. Eusebius relates that the apostle John met with Cerinthus, the early teacher of Christian Gnosticism (*H. E.* iv. 14.) “Ephesus was above all others the place where Oriental views were in various ways combined with the mythology and philosophy of Greece; in truth, this city was a complete storehouse of magical arts and deceptions.” (CREUZER.) Such influences produced disastrous results on Christians of that city and the churches of Asia. See Col. 2 : 8, 20-23, where we learn of teachers of a false philosophy who combined Oriental mysticism with Jewish ritualism. See on ver. 38, last paragraph.

31. Therefore watch—even as I have done, with unsleeping alertness. **And remember**—and imitate my example. **By the space of three years.** This precise and definite note of time must explain the various notes of time given and implied in chapter 19. Thus he preached three months in the synagogue (19 : 8), and two years in the school of Tyrannus (19 : 10), and some months afterward. (19 : 21, 22.) The “three years” may be taken as a proximate expression of nearly three years. How faithfully these Ephesian pastors obeyed this admonition may be learned from Rev. 2 : 2, 3: “I know thy works, and thy labor and patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil,” etc. Notice how strongly Paul puts it: **I ceased not to warn or admonish.** His vigilance was unremitting. **Every one**—his work was personal, overlooking no one, of the elders, or of the Ephesian church. **Night and day**—his industry was unceasing.

32 And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able^f to build you up, and to give you^g an inheritance among all them^h which
33 are sanctified. ⁱI have coveted no man's
34 silver, or gold, or apparel. Yea, ye yourselves know, ^kthat these hands have

ministered unto my necessities, and to
35 them that were with me. I have showed you all things, ^lhow that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, ^mIt is more blessed to give than to receive.

^f Eph. 2 : 20-22. ^g Col. 1 : 12; Heb. 9 : 15; 1 Peter 1 : 4, 5. ^h 1 Cor. 1 : 2; Heb. 10 : 14. ⁱ Num. 16 : 15; 1 Sam. 12 : 3; 1 Peter 5 : 2. ^k ch. 18 : 3; 2 Thess. 3 : 8. ^l Rom. 15 : 1; Eph. 4 : 28. ^m Deut. 14 : 29; Matt. 10 : 8; Luke 14 : 13, 14.

With tears—of solicitude. (See 2 Cor. 11 : 29.) His ministry had been warm, tender, and affectionate.

32. This tender and loving commendation to God is in keeping with Paul's reference to "tears," in the preceding verse. **I commend**, etc.—I leave you in God's hands, who will never leave you. **Brethren** is not found in the oldest authorities. **And to the word of his grace**—the gracious words of the gospel, its truths, doctrines, and promises, such as are contained in John, chapters 14-17. (See 14 : 3.) **Which**—properly, *who*, referring to God. **Can build you up**—a favorite expression of Paul. (Eph. 2 : 20, 21; 4 : 12, 16, 29. Compare 1 Cor. 3 : 10.) Significant to one familiar with the stately architecture of Ephesus. God through the Holy Spirit uses the truths of the gospel as an instrument in building up, or edification. (John 17 : 17.) **And to give you an inheritance**, rather, *the inheritance* of eternal life and glory among all them that are sanctified, and thus prepared for it. (See 26 : 18.) This beautiful thought of the saint's inheritance is a favorite one in Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians. (Eph. 1 : 14, 18; 5 : 5.) The figure is taken from the inheritance of God's separated people in the earthly Canaan. (Deut. 33 : 3, 4.)

33. Paul enforces generous and disinterested labor by his own example. **I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel.** "I seek not yours, but you." (2 Cor. 12 : 14.) Wealth in Oriental countries consisted largely of raiment as well as of precious metals. Compare Matt. 6 : 19 and James 5 : 2, where the destruction of earthly treasures by the moth is alluded to. (See also 2 Kings 5 : 5; Gen. 24 : 53; 45 : 22.) The Ephesians are said to have been noted for their luxurious clothing. Paul's spirit

formed a striking contrast to that of Demetrius. (19 : 25, 26.)

34. **Yea** is omitted by the oldest manuscripts. **These hands have ministered.** Doubtless holding them up to view. Thus, not only at Corinth (18 : 3), but also at Ephesus tent-making had been Paul's dependence for support. He probably worked with Aquila and Priscilla in both places. (1 Cor. 16 : 19.) Luke does not speak of Paul's working at Ephesus in his narrative, but only brings it out incidentally in this address. Paul alludes to it in 1 Cor. 11, 12. "Unto this present hour, . . . we toil, working with our own hands." Such undesignated agreement is an incidental proof of the truthfulness of the writings of Luke and Paul. **And to them that were with me**—such as Timothy, who had "often infirmities" (1 Tim. 5 : 23), and less able to work than Paul.

35. **I have shewed you all things**—or, *In all things I gave you an example* (Revised Version). **So laboring ye ought to support**, rather, *assist the weak*—that is, the weak, in body, who need such help. This is the most natural meaning of the phrase, and is in harmony with the following words of Jesus, which have reference to giving and receiving. (See Eph. 4 : 28.) Paul had not spared himself "labor and travail." (2 Cor. 11 : 27.) **And to remember**—a well-known saying of Jesus from that vast treasury which is not found in the Gospels. (John 21 : 25.) Yet this is the only one in the New Testament not recorded by the Evangelists. **How he said**—Emphatic, *He himself said*, marking the quotation as authentic beyond all doubt. **It is more blessed to give than to receive.** Jesus used the same word, *blessed* or *happy*, as in Matt. 5 : 3-11. They who give are *more happy*, in their

36 And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all.
 37 And they all wept sore, and ^afell on
 38 Paul's neck, ^aand kissed him, sorrowing

most of all for the words ^p which he spake, that they should see his face no more, And they accompanied him unto the ship.

^a Gen. 45 : 14 ; 46 : 29.

^o Rom. 16 : 16.

^p ver. 25.

present enjoyments and in their prospects of future blessedness, than they who receive. This precept breathes the spirit of our Lord's life and doctrine ; and he himself is its grandest illustration. (2 Cor. 8 : 9 ; Phil. 2 : 9.) It is an inspiration to those, who need not labor from necessity, to labor from benevolence.

36. The touching scene of parting is related with great simplicity ; evidently the description of an eye-witness. **He kneeled down**—a posture of special solemnity ; and seems to have been customary with Paul. (21 : 5 ; Eph. 3 : 14. See Luke 22 : 41 ; Acts 7 : 60 ; 9 : 40.) On the custom of standing in prayer, see Luke 18 : 11-13 ; Mark 11 : 25. **Prayed with them all**—his great heart would not leave any of them out. Luke reverently shrinks from repeating his prayer. But see Eph. 3 : 14-19, where we may catch a glimpse of his themes of prayer.

37. **They all wept sore**—with sobs and cries. **Fell on Paul's neck**—embracing him. **And kissed him** tenderly again and again, for such is the idea of the verb. Such demonstrative expressions of sorrow and affection are customary in the East. (See Gen. 45 : 14 ; 16 : 29.) The brotherly kiss was practiced among early Christians. Paul frequently refers to the "holy kiss" (Rom. 16 : 16 ; 1 Cor. 16 : 20, etc.), and Peter to the kiss of love. (1 Peter 5 : 14.)

38. **Sorrowing most of all, or distressed chiefly for the word he had spoken.** (Ver. 25.) Paul's deep conviction made it a most solemn reality to them. **They should see, rather, behold his face no more.** The verb is different from that in ver. 25. This denotes the earnest, reverent and loving gaze, with which they would look upon and contemplate Paul, the apostle, and their spiritual parent. (See on ver. 25.) **And they accompanied him**—or, *they brought him on his way* (as 15 : 3, and 21 : 5) **to the ship.** This indicates that the harbor was some distance from

the town. The site of Miletus has continued gradually to recede till now it is ten miles from the coast.

We now take leave of the church of Ephesus in the Acts. For some things in its early ecclesiastical history, see on ver. 29, 30. It became a metropolitan church, and exerted a moulding influence on the churches of the province of Asia. In the second century it seems to have become a source of ecclesiastical and hierarchical influences. Having lost its first love it yielded to formality and worldliness, and after a few centuries passes from history. "It is sad to contemplate the decline of primitive piety here, and the extinction of churches formed. So completely has 'the candlestick been removed out of its place' (Rev. 2 : 5) that not a living soul resides in Ephesus. Its streets are ploughed by the Ottoman serf, or browsed by the sheep of the peasant, and its mouldering arches and dilapidated walls, but whisper the tale of its departed glory." (FISH'S *Bible Lands Illustrated*, p. 745.)

PASTORS AND CHURCHES. In this chapter pastors are clearly recognized as overseers or superintendents of local churches, as well as teachers and preachers of the word. They are shepherds of the flock, and as such they are to feed the church of God, and guard against false doctrine and false teachers. (Ver. 28-31.) With this agree the Epistles. (1 Thess. 5 : 12 ; Heb. 13 : 17 ; 1 Peter 5 : 1-4.) The pastor is the leader and presiding officer of the church, the director and supervisor of its public religious instruction, the administrator of its ordinances, and the watcher for souls. His duties are necessarily both public and private. (Ver. 20 ; Col. 1 : 28.) The number of pastors to any church is nowhere fixed in the New Testament. This must depend most naturally upon the size and circumstances of the church. A church embracing as its field the whole city of Ephesus, or Philippi, would need more pastors than

the church in the house of Philemon. (Philem. 2.) Each of the seven churches of Asia had its *angel*, or *messenger*, which some regard as its pastor. (Rev. 2: 1, 8.) There seems to be not the same demand for a plurality of pastors now as in apostolic days; nor that there should be but one church to a town, or city.

PRACTICAL REMARKS.

1. In Christ's service we should show neither a cowardly nor a defiant spirit, but act calmly, meekly, and judiciously. (Ver. 1; John 10: 12-14.)

2. We should exhibit diligence in all our affairs, especially in religion. (Ver. 2; Rom. 12: 11.)

3. Faithfulness to Christ always arouses opposition from a wicked world. (Ver. 3; John 15: 20.)

4. Blessings return to those who give. Asia sends forth Paul into Europe, and Europe sends back brethren with Paul into Asia. (Ver. 4, 35.)

5. Haste is consistent with faithfulness. Paul wished to be in Jerusalem at Pentecost, but he did not slight Philippi or Troas. (Ver. 5, 6, 17.)

6. The first day of the week is pre-eminently the Lord's Day, and we can point back to the apostles for its observance. (Ver. 7; John 20: 19, 26.)

7. Long services and long sermons are for special, not ordinary occasions. (Ver. 7-9.)

8. It is best to keep awake in the public services of God. (Ver. 9.)

9. Preachers should minister to the bodies as well as souls of men. (Ver. 10-12; 10: 38.)

10. We should have our times of meditation. In our walks we can be alone with God. (Ver. 13; Luke 24: 32.)

11. We should keep our appointments, and hasten in the path of duty though it be one of suffering. (Ver. 14-16.)

12. It was quite common in early churches to have a plurality of pastors. (Ver. 17; 11: 30; 15: 4; Titus 1: 5; James 5: 14.)

13. The preacher should be able to appeal to his hearers in proof of his fidelity. (Ver. 18; 1 Thess. 2: 10; 2 Cor. 6: 3, 4.)

14. A humble and tender spirit is indispensable to ministerial usefulness. (Ver. 19; Luke 22: 25, 26.)

15. Public preaching and private religious conversation from house to house form two important parts of ministerial labor, and one cannot well take the place of the other. (Ver. 20; 1 Thess. 2: 11; 2 Tim. 4: 2.)

16. He who fails to enforce repentance and faith upon his hearers fails in preaching the gospel. (Ver. 21; Mark 1: 15.)

17. Inspired men were imperfect like other men, and special knowledge was given them only as needed for special objects of revelation. (Ver. 22; 2 Cor. 4: 7.)

18. The Holy Spirit is a foreteller of trials, as well as a comforter in afflictions. (Ver. 23; Rom. 8: 26.)

19. Christ's cause and work is dearer to the faithful minister than life itself. (Ver. 24; 1 Heb. 12: 1-3.)

20. The great design of the Christian ministry is to bear witness to the glad tidings of God's favor to men. (Ver. 24; 26: 16-18.)

21. The Christian life is a race, and it should be run with unswerving purpose. (Ver. 24.)

22. The minister should preach with eternity in view, and each time as faithfully as if it were his last. (Ver. 25; 2 Cor. 5: 10, 20.)

23. The minister should so labor to save his hearers, that, if any are lost, it shall be through no fault of his. (Ver. 26; 1 Cor. 9: 22.)

24. Courage is essential to a successful ministry, and is needed for preaching all the doctrines and practices of the gospel. (Ver. 20, 27; 4: 19, 20; 2 Cor. 4: 2; 1 Thess. 2: 4.)

25. The apostolic bishop was a pastor, or overseer, connected with a single church. (Ver. 28; 1 Tim. 3: 5.)

26. It is the duty of the pastor to look after the spiritual interests of the church, and seek to promote the spiritual welfare of every member. (Ver. 28; Titus 1: 7-9.)

27. "It must never be forgotten that the Holy Spirit makes men ministers, and the churches are only to recognize what the Spirit has done." (Dr. J. M. PENDLETON.) (Ver. 28.)

28. A Scriptural church consists of believers, God's redeemed people; and as baptism always followed believing in apostolic times, a church consists of baptized believers. (Ver. 28; Matt. 28: 19, 20; 1 Peter 1: 18-20.)

29. It is not strange that hierarchical and

Paul's voyage to Syria; visit to Cæsarea; and journey to Jerusalem.

21 AND it came to pass, that after we were gotten from them, and had launched, we

came with a straight course unto Coos; and the day following unto Rhodes; and 2 from thence unto Patara. And finding a ship sailing over unto Phenicia, we went

other errors may be traced in their beginnings to Ephesus and Asia Minor, since it was foretold that false teachers should both come in and arise among them. (Ver. 29, 30.)

30. Pride, greed, and selfishness are characteristic of false teachers. (Ver. 29, 30; John 10: 8, 12; Matt. 23: 4 f.)

31. A spirit of ceaseless industry should characterize the minister. (Ver. 31; 2 Tim. 4: 5.)

32. God builds up his people through his word, and prepares them for his gift of a heavenly inheritance. (Ver. 32; John 17: 6-9, 17.)

33. A Christian minister should especially be noted for his unselfishness. (Ver. 33-35; 1 Thess. 2: 5-11; 2 Thess. 3: 7-9.)

34. If a Christian minister is not supported by others, it is highly commendable if he supports himself. (Ver. 34; 1 Cor. 9: 4-6.)

35. The giver has a privilege, a joy and a reward, of which the receiver cannot partake. (Ver. 35; Matt. 25: 34-36, 40.)

36. Paul has given a model farewell address, and a pastor's manual for effective labor. (Ver. 18-35.)

37. What more fitting when we part than to unite our souls by prayer to God? (Ver. 36-38.)

38. Ministers and people should exercise such fidelity with one another that when they separate their parting may be like that of Paul and the Ephesian elders. (Ver. 36-38.)

Ch. 21: In this chapter Luke narrates Paul's voyage from Miletus, his stopping a week at Tyre, one day at Cæsarea, and a longer time at Jerusalem. Here Paul is welcomed by the brethren, and at the suggestion of James and the elders, he endeavored to conciliate the Hebrew Christians by performing certain Jewish ceremonials in the temple. He is there seized by an infuriated populace, but is rescued from death by the Roman officer, who permits him to speak to the people. Parts of April and May, A. D. 58.

1-16. PAUL'S VOYAGE FROM MILE-

TUS TO CÆSAREA. HIS JOURNEY THENCE TO JERUSALEM.

1. That after we had gotten from them—better, *after we had torn ourselves from them*, a forcible description of the painful and reluctant parting of Paul and the elders of Ephesus at Miletus. The most probable time, according to our computation was Monday morning, April 24, A. D. 58. **Coos**, or *Cos*, a small island now called Stanchio, forty miles south of Miletus. It was noted for its school of medicine. It was the birthplace of Hippocrates, the physician, and celebrated for its temple of Æsculapius. It must have been of interest to Luke, the physician. Here the ship probably lay at anchor over night. Going with a **straight course**—implying a quick passage. (See 16: 11.) **The day following**—probably Tuesday. **Rhodes**—the name of a famous island and its capital city, about fifty miles to the southeast of Cos, at the southwest corner of Asia Minor. It was celebrated for the great temple of the sun, and the Colossus, one of the seven wonders of the world, a brazen statue over one hundred feet high at the head of the harbor, but then in ruins, having been thrown down by an earthquake. Here they probably lay at anchor Tuesday night. **Patara**—about sixty miles east of Rhodes, the port of the city Xanthus, the capital of Lycia. It had a good harbor, and was the resort of coasting vessels. He reached here probably on Wednesday.

2. Providence favored Paul. Patara seems to have been the harbor whither his ship was bound from Troas. And now another ship of larger capacity is ready, in which he and his companions enter as passengers. The language implies that they embark at once, **we went aboard and put to sea**, probably early Thursday morning. They crossed over a distance of about three hundred and forty miles to **Phenicia**, the country on the coast, north of Palestine, containing the cities of Tyre and Sidon. (See on 11: 19.) It is said that the voyage, with favorable

3 aboard, and set forth. Now when we had discovered Cyprus, we left it on the left hand, and sailed into Syria, and landed at Tyre: for there the ship was to
 4 unload her burden. And finding disciples, we tarried there seven days: ^a who said to Paul through the Spirit, that he
 5 should not go up to Jerusalem. And when we had accomplished those days, we de-

parted and went our way; and they all brought us on our way, with wives and children, till *we were* out of the city: and
 6 ^r we kneeled down on the shore, and prayed. And when we had taken our leave one of another, we took ship, and they returned home again.
 7 And when we had finished *our* course from Tyre, we came to Ptolemais, and

^a ch. 20; 23.

^r ch. 20; 36.

winds takes about forty-eight hours. They probably arrive at Tyre (ver. 3) some time on Saturday.

3. Now when we had discovered Cyprus—rather, *having sighted Cyprus*, the graphic language of an eye-witness, using the phraseology of seamen. On *Cyprus*, see 4: 36; 13: 4-12. **Left it on the left**—this they would do in going in a direct course from Patara to Tyre. The coast of Cyprus served them as a guide, as the mariner's compass was then unknown. **Syria**—the Roman province consisting of Phœnicia and Palestine. **Tyre** was one of the chief ports of Phœnicia and a city of great antiquity. (See on 12: 20.) In Paul's day the glory of Tyre had long since waned. Antioch and Cæsarea had proved successful commercial rivals. Now its ruins by the sea fulfill the prophecy of Ezekiel (24: 14) as literally "a place for the spreading of nets." **For there the ship was to unload**—possibly this ship went no further. (See ver. 6.)

4. And finding disciples—rather, according to the most approved reading, *the disciples*, the members of the church there. The gospel had been preached there soon after the martyrdom of Stephen (11: 19), and a congregation gathered. (15: 3.) The verb implies that they *found out* the disciples by searching or inquiry. **We remained there seven days.** According to our reckoning, Paul arrived at Tyre by or before Saturday night, and was thus with the disciples on the first day of the week, April 30, A. D. 58. **Who said to Paul through the Spirit.** As in ver. 11, they knew that danger awaited Paul at Jerusalem, and therefore they exhorted him not to go there. The exhortation seems to have been prompted by their feelings, not by the Spirit. Paul also knew the same, but

he had the deep conviction that he must go. (20: 22, 23.) The prophetic warning of his brethren, however, prepared him through grace to encounter these perils and confirmed his conviction that it was God's will that he should suffer in his cause. **That he should not go up to Jerusalem**—or *not set foot in Jerusalem*. He might go through Judea, and then return to Antioch, but he must not enter Jerusalem.

5. When he had accomplished, or *completed the days*, the seven. (Ver. 4.) The idea is that of filling out the seven days. **They all brought us**, or escorted us (15: 3), *with wives and children*, showing what a bold Paul and his companions had taken upon the whole Christian community. **Out of, outside the city**, in a somewhat retired place. **Kneeled down on the shore**—literally, *the beach*, and **prayed**. The accuracy of Luke is here seen, in speaking of the *smooth shore* or beach, which extends for a considerable distance on both sides of ancient Tyre. This parting service probably took place on Sunday morning, May 7th. (See on ver. 4.)

6. When we had taken leave—or *bade one another farewell*. **We took ship**—probably the one which brought them from Patara to Tyre, though the Greek does not make it certain whether it was the same ship or not.

7. When we had finished our course—*completed the voyage*—from Tyre, we came down to Ptolemais, about thirty miles to the south, where they doubtless arrived the same day, perhaps in a few hours. This completed the sea portion of Paul's journey. The minuteness of the narrative and the use of nautical terms, indicate the writer as an eye witness, and his great carefulness as a narrator. Ptolemais

saluted the brethren, and abode with
8 them one day. And the next day we
that were of Paul's company departed,
and came unto Caesarea. And we entered

into the house of Philip the evangelist,
9 which was one of the seven: and abode
with him. And the same man had four
daughters, virgins, which did prophesy.

* ch. 6 : 5 ; 8 : 26, 40. † ch. 2 : 17 ; 13 : 1 ; Joel 2 : 28, 29.

was an important city on that portion of the coast, and was called Aceho in the Old Testament (Judg. 1 : 31), and is known in modern times as Acre. It is situated on the bay north of Mount Carmel, and has a population of about ten thousand. **Saluted the brethren**—from this it is evident that there was a church there. Paul doubtless had visited them before, as he would naturally pass through the city, in his previous journeys, on the great coast-road which connected Antioch with Caesarea. (11 : 30 ; 12 : 25 ; 15 : 2, 30 ; 18 : 22. See on 15 : 3.) **Abode one day**—having arrived early, this may have been that day and the night following.

8. We that were of Paul's company—not found in the best manuscripts. It may have been at first a marginal comment, and afterward introduced by some copyist into the text. **Caesarea**, about thirty miles south of Ptolemais, to which they appear to have journeyed by land in a single day, arriving there on Monday or Tuesday, May 8th or 9th. (See on ver. 5.) Further on Caesarea, see on 8 : 40. This was the third time Paul had been there (9 : 30 ; 18 : 22), but the first mention of his stopping there. **Philip the evangelist . . . one of the seven**, a historical statement distinguishing him from Philip the apostle. His appointment as one of the deacons preceded his work as an evangelist. He appears not to have continued long in the former position, as he left Jerusalem for Samaria, laboring as an evangelist there, and from place to place to Caesarea (8 : 5, 40), where over twenty years later he is now found. (See on 8 : 5.)

The word *Evangelist* means an *announcer of good tidings*, and is found three times in the New Testament. Here it is applied officially to Philip, who had gone from place to place preaching the gospel. In 2 Tim. 4 : 5 Paul exhorts Timothy to "do the work of an evangelist," preaching and exercising his ministry at Ephesus and in various

places. In Eph. 4 : 11 *evangelists* are distinguished from apostles and from prophets, whose offices were from their nature temporary, and from pastors and teachers, who were connected with local churches. The apostles were inspired missionaries and organizers of the Christian church, and the witnesses of our Lord's resurrection. (1 : 21, 22.) The seventy were announcers of the glad tidings, and thus evangelists, the preparers of the way of the Lord. (Luke 10 : 1, 9, 11.) So also Philip, Timothy, and others sought especially the conversion of sinners and the gathering of disciples into churches, thus preparing the way for the more permanent work of pastors. The word evangelist is never applied in the New Testament to the writers of the four Gospels. From this it appears that the office and work of evangelists were recognized in the apostolic churches, and that they were preachers of the gospel, without charge of any particular church. They answer to missionaries, traveling preachers, and others in the active ministry of our day, outside of the pastorate. There were evangelists before there were pastors. The one prepared the way for the other. Eusebius, referring to the state of the church in the time of Trajan (died A. D. 117), speaks of "many disciples, . . . traveling abroad, performed the work of evangelists, being ambitious to preach Christ. Having laid the foundation of the faith in foreign nations . . . they proceeded to other countries and nations." (*Eccles. Hist.* iii. 37.) In the early churches there were many evangelists, such as Timothy, Titus, Silas, and others. It is to be regretted that the office and work of the evangelist is too limited in its application and too much overlooked at the present day.

9. As a remarkable fact, Luke mentions that Philip had **four daughters, virgins, who did prophesy**, having the gift of prophecy (1 Cor. 11 : 4 ; 12 : 10 ; 14 : 1. See on 11 : 27.) Within their sphere they

10 And as we tarried *there* many days, there came down from Judæa a certain prophet, named ^uAgabus. And when he was come unto us, ^vhe took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Spirit, ^xSo shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, ^yand shall deliver *him* into the hands of the Gentiles.

12 And when we heard these things,

^u ch. 11 : 28. ^v 1 Sam. 15 : 27, 28; Isa. 20 : 3, 4; Jer. 13 : 1-11; John 13 : 12-14; 20 : 22. ^x ch. 20 : 23; 24 : 27; ^y ch. 28 : 17. ^z see ver. 4. ^a ch. 20 : 24. ^b 1 Sam. 3 : 18; Matt. 26 : 42; Luke 22 : 42. ^c 1 Sam. 17 : 22.

were inspired publishers of the gospel and foretellers of future events. (2 : 17.) They may have also intimated the persecution awaiting Paul at Jerusalem. (See on ver. 12.) "We find no trace of any order of virgins in the early church." (HOWSON AND SPENCE.) According to tradition two of them were afterward married. It is not necessarily implied that they were public teachers. (See 1 Cor. 13 : 34.)

10. As we tarried *there* many days. The number is quite indefinite. As Pentecost occurred in A. D. 58, on Thursday, May the 18th, Paul probably remained at Cæsarea five or six days. (See on ver. 8.) A certain prophet named Agabus—probably the same one as mentioned in 11 : 28, on which see. Further on *prophecs*, see on 13 : 1.

11. Paul's girdle—which was used to bind the loose flowing robes about the waist. It was made sometimes of leather (Matt. 3 : 4), sometimes of linen or other material, and tied in a knot or fastened by a clasp. Like an ancient prophet, Agabus speaks both by symbolism and explanatory words. Zelekiah made horns of iron (1 Kings 22 : 11); Isaiah walked naked and barefoot (Isa. 20 : 2, 3); Jeremiah used the marred linen girdle (Jer. 13 : 4-9); and Ezekiel the tile and the iron pan. (Ezek. 4 : 1-3.) Thus saith the Holy Spirit—corresponding to the Old Testament formula, "Thus saith the Lord." It would seem that Paul had laid aside his girdle, and Agabus performs the symbolic act upon himself. The prophets before this had warned Paul in general terms; Agabus now predicts the exact danger. The fulfillment is related in ver. 33. So shall the Jews, etc. It was through the Jews,

both we, and they of that place, ^zbesought him not to go up to Jerusalem. Then Paul answered, ^aWhat mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? For I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.

14 And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, ^bThe will of the Lord be done.

15 And after those days we took up our ^ccarriages, and went up to Jerusalem.

and at their instigation, that the Romans bound him and made him a prisoner.

12. We, and they of that place, Paul's companions, Luke, Aristarchus, Trophimus, and the Christians at Cæsarea, among whom doubtless were the four daughters of Philip. Besought him not to expose himself to impending danger, not knowing that it was the divine will. (Ver. 14.) Compare Peter's vain endeavor to dissuade his Lord from his path of suffering. (Matt. 16 : 22.)

13. What mean ye to weep and to break my heart? You only intensify my suffering, without lessening my danger or changing my purpose. It was hard for Paul to break away from friends (20 : 36, 38), and the tender entreaties of affection. Stop all this, for I am ready. The pronoun *I* is emphatic in the original, showing that Paul had well considered the matter and had counted the cost. He was thoroughly convinced of the Lord's will, and nothing could cause him to swerve therefrom. (20 : 24.) He held himself in readiness to suffer, and even to die at Jerusalem for Christ's sake. These various predictions of Agabus and others only confirmed his belief, that it was God's will that he should suffer persecution at Jerusalem.

14. The brethren infer from the words and the acts of Paul that he is guided by the Spirit; and they ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done. So the Lord had taught them, to pray, "Thy will be done." There is no evidence, however, that this is either a quotation or an allusion to the Lord's Prayer.

15. After those days—the several

16 There went with us also *certain* of the disciples of Cesarea, and brought with them one Mnason of Cyprus, an old disciple, with whom we should lodge.

Paul at Jerusalem; his endeavour to conciliate the Hebrew Christians.

17 ^d And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly.

18 And the *day* following Paul went in with us unto James; ^e and all the elders were present. And when he had saluted them, ^f he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry.

20 And when they heard *it*, they glorified the Lord: and [they] said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands

^d ch. 15 : 4.

^e ch. 15 : 2, 6.

^f ch. 15 : 4, 12; Rom. 15 : 18, 19.

mentioned in ver. 10. **We took up our carriages**—or, *We packed up our baggage*. Possibly the alms from the Gentile churches constituted a part of this. (24:17.) In old English, “carriages” were things which they carried. Such is its use in 1 Sam. 17 : 22 and Isa. 10 : 28. Carriages in the modern sense were unknown to the ancients. Travel was mostly performed on horses or camels. Chariots and rude carts were sometimes used. **Went up to Jerusalem**—about sixty-three miles. They doubtless took portions of two days, arriving at Jerusalem, May 17, the day before Pentecost. (See on 23 : 31.)

16. There went with us, etc. The disciples of Cesarea were evidently solicitous about the dangers threatening Paul at Jerusalem. (Ver. 11-14.) **And brought with them one Mnason—with them**, is not in the original. It is quite improbable that they brought Mnason with them from Cesarea. It is better rendered, *Bringing us to Mnason*, etc. So Bible Union Ver., Hackett, Alford, and others. We know nothing of *Mnason* beyond this verse. He was a native of Cyprus, but now had his home at Jerusalem. So it had been with Barnabas, and his sister Mary. (See 4 : 36, 37, 12 : 12.) **An old, ancient or early disciple**; probably converted about the time of Pentecost; possibly a personal follower of Jesus, and one of those from whom Luke may have derived information in writing his Gospel and the Acts. *Mnason* is a Greek name, and he was most likely a foreign Jew, or a Gentile who had first become a proselyte, and then a Christian. It was fitting for the apostle to the Gentiles to enjoy the hospitality of such an one. **With whom we should lodge**—indicating *Mnason* as one of the wealthier

members of the church. Jerusalem was full of people at Pentecost, and it was a wise precaution to arrange beforehand for lodging Paul and his company.

17-26. **PAUL ASSUMES A VOW TO CONCILIATE THE HEBREW CHRISTIANS.** (1 Cor. 9 : 19-22; Num. 6 : 5.) May, A. D. 58.

17. When we were come to Jerusalem. This was Paul's fifth, and his last recorded visit to Jerusalem after his conversion. With this Luke begins his account of Paul's captivity. **The brethren received us gladly**—privately and informally, at Mnason's house. The public and more formal reception by the elders occurred the next day at the house of James.

18. And the day following—probably the Day of Pentecost. **James**—our Lord's brother, and pastor of the church. (See on 12 : 17; 15 : 13.) That no apostle was present may be inferred from the fact that none are mentioned. **All the elders were present.** These were the *overseers* or co-pastors of the church. The largeness of the church and the several places of holding religious meetings necessitated a plurality of pastors. (See on 20 : 17.) They would naturally all be in the city at Pentecost, and could be easily assembled at the house of James. It would seem that this interview had been specially arranged. This mention of James and the elders does not, however, necessarily exclude other leading brethren. (See on 15 : 6, 22.) It is probable that at this meeting Paul presented the gifts of the foreign churches. (24:17. See 11 : 30.)

19. When he had saluted them—or *embraced them*, such being the formal, Oriental act, both at parting and meeting. So Paul had done on the

of Jews there are which believe; and they
21 are all zealous of the law: and they are
informed of thee, ^bthat thou teachest all
the Jews which are among the Gentiles
to forsake Moses, saying, ⁱthat they ought

not to circumcise *their* children, neither
22 to walk after the customs. What is it
therefore? The multitude must needs
come together: for they will hear that
23 thou art come. Do therefore this that we

^a Rom. 10 : 2; Gal. 1 : 14.

^b ch. 16 : 1-3; 1 Cor. 9 : 19-21.

ⁱ Gal. 3 : 24, 25; 5 : 3.

preceding visit. (18 : 22.) **He declared particularly, etc.** *He recounted one by one the things that God had wrought, etc.* His speech must have been long and of thrilling interest, suited to a Pentecostal occasion. James and the elders must have sympathized with him in his work. (15 : 3, 4, 25, 26.) **By his ministry.** (See on 20 : 34.)

20. Glorified the Lord—or, according to the oldest manuscripts, *glorified God*, even as Paul had ascribed the work to God. (Ver. 19. See on 11 : 18.) **They said to him**—they show at once their anxiety regarding the burning question: The relation of Jewish Christians to the law, and the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles. **Thou seest or beholdest**—Paul had an opportunity at the feast to see the **thousands of the Jews**, not only at Jerusalem, but from Palestine and other countries, that **believe**. They had supplemented their Jewish belief and observances by faith in Jesus as the Messiah. And they were **all zealous of the law, or zealots for the law**. The word in the original is the same as that of the sect of Zealots, who rigorously adhered to all the ceremonies of the Mosaic law. It was natural before the destruction of Jerusalem for Christian Jews to hold on to the observances in which they had been trained from childhood. A large body subsequently withdrew and formed the sects known as Nazarenes and Ebionites. They rejected the authority and writings of Paul, and accounted him as an apostate; they also held false views regarding the person of Christ.

21. And they are informed of thee—their information was prejudiced, and perverted, and hence false. Paul had taught, as he had already written to the Galatians, that justification was by faith and not by the works of the law; that circumcision avails nothing, as a condition or a means of salvation. (Gal. 2 : 16; 3 : 11; 5 : 6;

6 : 15.) But he had not taught Jewish Christians to **forsake Moses, etc.** So far from that, he had circumcised Timothy (16 : 9), in order that he might not be offensive to the Jews, and do them the more good. He had taught: "Was any man called, being circumcised? Let him not become uncircumcised. Hath any been called in uncircumcision? Let him not be circumcised. Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God." (1 Cor. 7 : 18-20.) But such teaching could easily be perverted by his prejudiced opposers, and being repeated from one to another, come to express exactly the opposite of what he intended. He was thus accused of teaching that the Jews should **forsake or apostatize from the law of Moses**, that they should **not circumcise their children nor walk after the customs** of the ceremonial law, and this not as a matter of liberty, but of obligation imposed by the gospel. How obnoxious such teachings must have seemed to the average Jew, may be inferred from the contempt and abomination in which the very name "uncircumcised" was held. (1 Sam. 17 : 26; Ezek. 28 : 10; 32 : 29, 30.)

22. What is it, therefore—what is best to be done under these circumstances? **The, rather, A multitude**—a promiscuous assemblage of Jewish Christians. **Must needs come together.** The Revised and the Improved Bible Union Versions omit this, and render, "*What is it therefore? They will certainly hear that thou art come.*" They will be watching you and discussing your conduct and opinions with prejudice and hostility.

23. Do therefore this. The advice of James and the elders. (Ver. 18.) **We have four men.** The language implies that they were Jewish believers. **A vow on them.** This appears to have been a Nazarite vow. (Num. 6 : 1-21. Compare 18 : 18.) This vow involved the

say to thee: ^k We have four men which
24 have a vow on them; them take ^l and
purify thyself with them, and be at
charges with them, that they may shave
their heads: and all may know that those
things whereof they were informed concern-
ing thee, are nothing; but *that thou*

thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest
25 the law. As touching the Gentiles which
believe, we have written and concluded
that they observe no such thing, save
only that they keep themselves from
things offered to idols, and from blood,
and from strangled, and from fornication.

^k ch. 18 : 18.

^l Num. 6 : 1-21.

strictest abstinence and purification, and Paul's participation in it would be a complete refutation of the false charges of the Jews against him. This vow required an ascetic life for a time, usually thirty days. Paul could not go through the whole observance; but it was permitted any one who wished, to share in the concluding ceremonies, which consisted of certain offerings in the temple, and which continued through seven days. James and his official brethren very likely knew of Paul's previous vow on his preceding visit (18 : 18), and this fact may have made them the more ready to suggest a similar observance again.

24. Them take and purify thyself with them. Make thyself one of them; observing the ordinances which they observe. This is the most natural meaning of the language. Some suppose that Paul did not assume the Nazarite vow with them, but simply performed such preliminary rites of purification as would enable him to take part with them in their concluding services. But in such a case the words *with them* would more naturally have been omitted. **Be at charges with,** rather, *for them*—involving considerable expense, such as purchasing for each one of them a he-lamb for a burnt offering, a ewe-lamb for a sin offering, a ram for a peace offering, together with unleavened bread, cakes of fine flour mingled with oil, and a drink offering. There would also be a fee to the priest or Levite for shaving the head. (Num. 6 : 13-18.) Devout Jews would sometimes bear the expenses for others. Josephus tells us (*Antiq.* xix. 6, 1) that Agrippa I., on arriving at Jerusalem from Rome, to take possession of his kingdom, as a means of purchasing popularity, paid the expenses of many Nazarites. **That they may shave their heads.** As one of the require-

ments of the Nazarite vow was long hair (Num. 6 : 5), so the shaving of the head was a sign of its completion. (Num. 6 : 18.) Nothing is said of Paul's own hair, which may have been short already. Besides, the phrase *That they may shave their heads* is here used to mean that they may complete their vow, and be released from it; and there was no necessity of speaking of Paul's head. When the victims were offered at the conclusion of the vow, the shaven hair was burned under the sacrifice of the peace-offering. (Num. 6 : 18.) **Are nothing**—that these accusations are without foundation in fact. **All may know**—rather, *All will know.* **That thou thyself walkest orderly,** according to rule, *keeping the law*, and avoiding all occasion of giving offence. Although he was the apostle to the Gentiles, he would show to conservative Jewish Christians that he did not ignore Jewish customs, and was not disloyal to the Mosaic law. As there is no conflict between the law and the gospel, the one preparatory to the other, the latter the fulfiller and the perfecter of the former; so there was nothing inconsistent in Paul's acceding to their request, so long as he did not make these observances a condition or means of justification.

25. In suggesting this course of action to Paul, James and the elders distinctly intimate, that they would not abridge the liberty of Gentile converts. That had been settled at the Conference at Jerusalem. (See on 15 : 19, 20.) **As touching,** etc. Better, *But concerning the Gentiles,* etc. This was to meet any objection in Paul's mind, arising from the bearing of such action on Gentile believers. **We have written**—rather, *we wrote.* (15 : 23.) **And concluded**—better, *and decided.* **That they observe no such thing, save only.** These words are not

26 Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them entered into the temple, to signify the accomplish-

ment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for every one of them.

found in the three oldest manuscripts, and are omitted by the Revised Version. Alford and Meyer retain them. They may have been dropped by copyists, because they do not occur in the parallel passage. (15: 28.)

26. Then Paul took the men.

In consenting to the advice of James and the elders, Paul was carrying out his own principles of action, which he had long before adopted: "To the Jew I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews." (1 Cor. 9: 20, 21.) It was also in accord with his previous performance of a vow (18: 18), and with his attendance at the national religious festivals. (18: 20, 21; 20: 16.) It was not the Mosaic law that Paul opposed, but the Pharisaic and Judaizing abuses of the law. (Rom. 3: 31.) See on ver. 24, closing note. "According to Paul's views the ceremonies of the law were matters of indifference. Christian love, which was the grand moving principle of his conduct, caused him to accommodate himself to the views of the Jews, when he could do so without any sacrifice of principle in order to remove their prejudices." (GLOAG.) Both James and Paul were in positions of extreme difficulty, in their relations to the demands and prejudices of Jewish and Gentile converts. They understood each other (Gal. 2: 7-9), and neither in this case appears to have regarded the part here taken inconsistent with the teachings of Paul. Doubtless the latter felt that it was both lawful and expedient to do as he did. Yet from after results it may be doubted whether expediency in this case, though it involved no sacrifice of principle, was the best and wisest. If the outcome had been foreseen it is probable that neither James would have advised nor Paul assented. See last paragraph on this verse, below.

The next day—the third after his arrival at Jerusalem. **Purifying himself with them**—he himself undergoing the necessary ablutions. (Ver. 24.) **To signify the accomplishment**—announcing to the priests

in the temple *the completion of the days of purification*, that at the end of seven days the vow would be completed and the offerings made. The priests would thus understand that Paul was only a sharer with the four men, and would not be expected to continue thirty days. (See on ver. 23.) Paul needed also to notify the priests so that the offerings might be in readiness at the proper time. **Until that an offering**, etc.—better, *until the offering*, well-known and required on such an occasion, *was brought for every one of them*. Some suppose that Paul and the four men continued in the temple precincts, so as to avoid all persons and every cause of ceremonial defilement, until the offerings were made. But there is nothing in the language that really implies this. Besides, it is very improbable that Paul remained there three or four days until his arrest.

The question arises, How could Paul accept these offerings, especially the sin-offerings, when Christ had suffered once for all, and sacrifices were done away through him? To this it may be replied, that as these sacrifices from the beginning had pointed toward Christ, so now believing Jews regarded them as pointing back to Christ, and typical of what he had done. They may have come gradually to the full knowledge that sacrifices and ceremonial observances were done away through Christ. The Epistle to the Hebrews may have been necessary to teach them this lesson thoroughly. Paul doubtless regarded them as legal observances, innocent in themselves, but not obligatory. He may not himself have understood the matter so thoroughly as he did later, when he wrote his Epistles to the Ephesians and the Colossians, and when the Epistle to the Hebrews was written. Perhaps he would have done differently at this later period with his fuller knowledge. Historically the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple may have been necessary, in order to put an end to those ceremonies and sacrifices which had been superseded.

Paul's seizure by the populace, and rescue by the Roman officer.

- 27 And when the seven days were almost ended, ^m the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and ⁿ laid hands on him, crying out, Men of Israel, help.
28 This is the man, ^o that teacheth all men every where against the people, and the law, and this place; and further brought

Greeks also into the temple, and hath
29 polluted this holy place. (For they had seen before with him in the city Trophimus an Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.)
30 And all the city was moved, and the people ran together. And they took Paul, and drew him out of the temple: and forthwith the doors were shut.

^m ch. 24 : 18.

ⁿ ch. 26 : 21.

^o ch. 24 : 5, 6.

27-40. PAUL'S SEIZURE BY THE JEWS, AND HIS FIRST RESCUE BY THE ROMAN COMMANDER. (23: 26, 27; 24: 17, 18.) About May 23, A. D. 58.

27. While Paul is trying to conciliate the believing Jews, he arouses anew the hostility of the unbelieving Jews. **When the seven days were almost ended**—*about to be completed*. The seven days are spoken of as well known, and doubtless refer to the days during which Paul was sharing with the four the Nazarite vow. (See on ver. 23.) It was about six days since he arrived at Jerusalem, and the fifth or sixth of the seven days, either of which sufficiently satisfies the language. (See on 24: 11.) **The Jews from Asia**—the province of Asia. (See on 16: 6.) **When they saw**—or *observed him in the temple*. Paul was widely known, not only in Ephesus, but throughout the province of Asia. (19: 10.)

28. **Men of Israel, help**—to apprehend Paul and bring him to punishment. By their cry they would intimate that a great outrage had been committed. **That teacheth . . . against the people, and the law, and this place**—compare the similar charge against Stephen. (6: 13.) We see the feeling of unbelieving Jews against Paul. They charge him with turning against his own nation and religion. They arouse race prejudice and religious fanaticism. **Brought Greeks also into the temple**, etc. If these Gentiles had come only into the court of the Gentiles, there could be no objection, but the charge is that Paul had brought them into the sacred precincts which they were forbidden to enter on pain of death. A stone inscription, a tablet from the temple was found in 1871, and is now in the Imperial Museum of Constantinople,

which reads: "No foreigner may enter within the balustrade and fence that surrounds the temple; whoever is taken in the act will be responsible to himself for his death which will ensue." (*Twenty-one Years' Work in the Holy Land*, pp. 167-9.) Trophimus (next verse) they supposed had committed this act, and had thus made himself liable to death. But they regard Paul as even the guiltier party in having brought him into the temple; and therefore himself deserving of death. (See further description of temple, on Matt. 21: 12.)

29. This verse should not be put into a parenthesis. It gives the reason of the charge against Paul, on which it was founded,—a very slender foundation indeed. **Before** this occasion they had seen Trophimus with Paul **in the city**, and **they supposed**, a mere inference which their imagination and prejudice made a reality to them, **that Paul had brought him into the temple**. Trophimus an, rather, *the Ephesian*, the one mentioned before (20: 4), who had accompanied Paul to Jerusalem, and was well-known by sight to many of the Jews of Asia. (Ver. 27.) He was doubtless a Gentile convert, who had embraced the gospel without first becoming a proselyte.

30. **And all the city was moved**. A tumult arose, similar to that at Ephesus. (19: 29.) "The frequent insults which the Herods had put upon the religious prejudices of the Jews had developed a spirit of excitability which was quickly roused on the slightest pretext." (HOWSON AND SPENCE.) **Drew him**, implying violence—*dragged him out of the temple*, as one defiling it and unworthy to be in it. **And forthwith the**

31 [¶] And as they went about to kill him, tidings came unto the chief captain of the band, that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. [¶] Who immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down unto them. And when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they left beating of Paul. 33 Then the chief captain came near, and took him, and [¶] commanded him to be

bound with two chains; and demanded who he was, and what he had done. And some cried one thing, and some another, among the multitude. And when he could not know the certainty for the tumult, he commanded him to be carried 35 into the castle. And when he came upon the stairs, so it was, that he was borne of the soldiers for the violence of the people.

¶ John 16 : 2. ¶ ch. 23 : 27 ; 24 : 7. ¶ ver. 11 ; ch. 20 : 23.

doors—which separated the court of Israel from the court of the Gentiles, **were shut**—by the Levites in charge. Paul was probably in the court of Israel near the chambers where the Nazarites performed their vows. Had they not laid hands on him he might have fled to the altar for safety. (Exod. 21 : 13, 14 ; 1 Kings 2 : 28.) Now that he is dragged forth, the doors are shut, to prevent any profanation of the temple by the riot.

31. And as they went about, rather, were seeking, to kill him. This was their object, and that it could be unlawfully accomplished, the killing of Stephen is a proof. By beating him promiscuously in the crowd, his murder would be laid to mob-violence, rather than to any one individual. **Tidings came unto**—better, *up to*—**the chief captain.** The Roman garrison was stationed in the Tower of Antonia (named after Marc Antony), which was situated at the northwest corner of the temple area, with which it communicated by two flights of stairs. It was about one hundred feet high and overlooked the temple and commanded a view of what was going on in the courts within. Notice how exactly Luke conforms his language to its higher local position. **The chief captain**, or military *tribune*, was a commander of a thousand soldiers, here called the **band** or *cohort*, answering to our regiment. (10 : 1.) The Roman legion consisted of about six thousand men under six tribunes who commanded in turn. The chief captain or *tribune* answered generally to our colonel, and often to our brigade commander. The name of this one was Clandius Lysias. (23 : 26.) **That all Jerusalem was in an uproar**—*stirred up* into a tumult.

32. Soldiers and centurions.

(10 : 1.) During the festivals, soldiers were constantly under arms ready to suppress any popular disturbance. The chief captain took a considerable troop as he had more than one centurion, each one of whom commanded a hundred men. **Ran down unto**—literally, *upon them*. Again Luke's language corresponds with the position of the castle above the temple. Such little correspondences illustrate his accuracy. As soon as they saw the soldiers coming they left off **beating Paul**. They had not been long at this, for it was but a moment's work to report the tumult to the chief captain, who at once could descend to the spot where the disturbance was. The mob was afraid to do unlawful violence in presence of the soldiers; they might be called to an account for wrong-doing.

33. Then the chief captain **took or laid hold of him**, formally arrested him, so that he might not be killed without a trial. Supposing him to be a desperate criminal, perhaps a popular political agitator (ver. 37), he commands him **to be bound with two chains**, each hand to a soldier for security. **And demanded**—of the people around him. **Who he was**—his name, rank, and character; **what he had done**—taking it for granted he had committed some crime.

34. The whole narrative is vivid, as related by an eye-witness. Thus the confusion and the clamor of the people are especially lifelike. **Into the castle**—or *barracks*, that portion of the Tower of Antonia which was used by the soldiers. **To be carried**—the idea is not that of being *borne* as in the next verse, but of being *led* or *brought* into the castle. Josephus speaks of the tower of Antonia in *Jewish War*, v. 5, 8.

35. The stairs—leading from the temple area to the barracks in the tower

36 For the multitude of the people followed after, crying, *“Away with him.”*

Paul’s address to the people; pleads his citizenship.

37 AND as Paul was to be led into the castle, he said unto the chief captain, *May I speak unto thee?* Who said, *Canst thou speak Greek?* *Art not thou that*

Egyptian, which before these days madest an uproar, and leddest out into the wilderness four thousand men that were 39 murderers? But Paul said, *“I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city: and, I beseech thee, suffer me to speak unto the 40 people. And when he had given him*

* ch. 22 : 22; Luke 23 : 18; John 19 : 15. † see ch. 5 : 36. ‡ ch. 9 : 11; 22 : 3; Rom. 11 : 1; 2 Cor. 11 : 22; Phil. 3 : 5. § ch. 22 : 25-29.

of Antonia. (See on ver. 31.) **He was borne by the soldiers**—lifted up and carried bodily for, or on account of, **the violence of the people**, who were pressing upon them, eager that he should be put to death. (Ver. 36.) “A vivid reminiscence of the scene by Luke, who well remembered seeing his beloved teacher, as the soldiers led him up the stairs, completely lifted from his feet by the resistless pressure of the crowd behind.” (ALEXANDER.)

36. The pressure and violence of the crowd is explained. **For the multitude of the people**, the Jews, followed, or was following. They were pushing forward continuously, crying, shouting again and again, here, there, and all over, **Away with him**, from the living! *Away with him*, to death. The same cry that was uttered twenty-eight years before, near the same spot, against our Lord. (Luke 23 : 18.)

37. When the soldiers had brought Paul to a place where he could stand, he desires to speak to the people, before he passes into the tower. He addresses the chief captain. **May I speak**, or more exactly, *say something to thee?* The chief captain appears to have been surprised that Paul addresses him in Greek, and exclaims, **Canst thou speak Greek?** He begins to suspect that Paul is not the political agitator he supposed.

38. **Art thou not that Egyptian?** rather, *Art thou not then the Egyptian*, as I supposed? Almost as if he had said, *Thou art not the Egyptian then.* He seems to have known that the Egyptian could not speak Greek. Josephus speaks of an Egyptian as one of the many impostors of the time, and gives two accounts of him which differ somewhat from each other. (*Jew. War*, ii. 13, 5; *Antiq.*, 7, 6.) From the three

accounts it appears that this impostor claimed that he was a prophet and led out four thousand desperate characters into the desert, between Judea and Egypt and returned with a much larger force. These he increased to about thirty thousand men, whom he deluded into the belief that he was the Messiah, encamping on the Mount of Olives and promising that the walls of Jerusalem should fall down at his command. Felix, the governor, attacked and defeated them, slaying four hundred and taking two hundred prisoners, the Egyptian and others escaping. This may have occurred a year before this, or perhaps at the preceding Passover. **That were murderers**—better, *assassins*, a kind of robbers, described by Josephus (*Jewish War*, ii. 13, 3), who concealed short swords or daggers beneath their garments, and mingling with the people killed secretly and treacherously any one they might wish. One of their earliest victims was Jonathan the high priest.

39. **I am a man, a Jew of Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean, no insignificant city.** Tarsus, the capital of Cilicia, was distinguished for its culture and its schools, and on its coins bore the proud title, “The Independent Capital City.” It was a “free city,” having its own constitution, its senate, or court of alderman its common council and its popular assembly. (See on 6 : 9; 9 : 11.) **Suffer me to speak to the people.** Paul composed, and they violent with excitement; he to announce a Saviour and the words of life, and they crying out for his death. Compare a similar desire of Paul at Ephesus. (19 : 30.)

40. **When he had given him license, or leave, to speak.** That the chief captain gave this permission to a

licence, Paul stood on the stairs, and beckoned with the hand unto the people.

And when there was made a great silence, he spake unto *them* in the Hebrew

7 ch. 12 : 17; 1 Peter 3 : 15.

man whom he had just taken prisoner has seemed strange. But his surprise at finding out his mistake regarding Paul; the citizenship of the latter in such a city as Tarsus; the Greek he spoke, and his evident education and refinement; and last, but not least, the Holy Spirit with him exerting any needed divine influence, are all sufficient to explain his action. Paul stands on the stairs leading into the tower (ver. 35) and beckoned with his hand as a signal that he wished to speak (13 : 16), the chief captain having very likely released one of his hands from its chain. Paul's unexpected appearance upon the stairs, his gesture, the presence of the chief Roman officer and the soldiers, curiosity to know what he would say, and the prospect of a speedy trial all tended to produce a great silence. The Hebrew tongue—the Aramean dialect of Palestine, which was then spoken by the Jews. (John 5 : 2; 19 : 13, 17, 20.)

PRACTICAL REMARKS.

1. It is fitting for Christians at parting to commend one another in prayer to God. (Ver. 1, 5; 20 : 36.)

2. Life is like a voyage with its changes, perils and sufferings. (Ver. 1-7; 20 : 24.)

3. God uses the commerce of the nations in opening a way to the gospel. (Ver. 1-7; 28 : 11-14.)

4. Our duty is not to be measured by the dangers which threaten us, but by God's will, word, and providence. (Ver. 4, 10-14; Luke 9 : 51.)

5. Parents should take their children with them to places of prayer. (Ver. 5; Ps. 8 : 2.)

6. We have here incidental evidence that the early Christians prayed extemporaneously. (Ver. 5; 20 : 36; John 4 : 21, 24.)

7. We should seek our first and nearest companions from among Christians. (Ver. 7; 2 Cor. 6 : 14.)

8. The office of an evangelist should be recognized by all our churches. (Ver. 8; 1 Tim. 1 : 3.)

9. Christian women have a most import-

ant work and sphere in the church. (Ver. 9; Rom. 16 : 1; Phil. 4 : 3.)

10. It is often well to know the dangers that await us, but to evade them may not be the will of God. (Ver. 10-13; 20 : 22-24.)

11. The Christian is not to make his feelings and preferences, or the emotions of his friends his criterion of duty. (Ver. 11-13; John 20 : 17.)

12. If we know God's will, nothing should make us swerve from it. (Ver. 12, 13; Phil. 3 : 11.)

13. We should welcome the cross, not for its own sake, but for the Lord's sake. (Ver. 13; 2 Cor. 12 : 10; Phil. 1 : 29.)

14. Whatever the sacrifice, we should yield cheerfully to God's will. (Ver. 14; Matt. 6 : 10; 26 : 42.)

15. Our affection for friends should not retard or unfit us for duty. (Ver. 15; Luke 9 : 60-62.)

16. The exercise of hospitality among Christians is beautiful and useful. (Ver. 16; Heb. 13 : 2; 3 John 5-8.)

17. Joy is becoming Christians when they meet. (Ver. 17; Phil. 2 : 17, 18.)

18. Like Paul, we should commend ourselves by our humility and evangelical labors. (Ver. 18, 19; 20 : 18-21.)

19. True piety will rejoice in the spread of the gospel anywhere and everywhere. (Ver. 19, 20; 1 Cor. 13 : 6.)

20. Though Christianity is as broad as God's holiness and love, yet some of its possessors may be very narrow through education and prejudice. (Ver. 20; Gal. 3 : 1, 28.)

21. Baptism did not take the place of circumcision. It is evident that neither Paul nor James taught or believed it. (Ver. 21; 15 : 1, 8-10.)

22. Detraction and opposition often come to the most earnest workers in Christ's cause. (Ver. 20, 21; 2 Tim. 3 : 12.)

23. Good works and outward observances have their place, but as a condition of justification are out of their place. (Ver. 22-25; Rom. 3 : 20; James 2 : 18.)

24. There are times when we may accommodate ourselves to the prejudices of others, provided that we can thereby promote peace

22 tongue, saying, Men, ^abrethren, and fathers, hear ye my defence *which I make* ² now unto you. (And when they heard that he spake in the Hebrew tongue to

them, they kept the more silence. And ³ he saith,) ^aI am verily a man *which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city* ^b at the feet of

^a ch. 7 : 2.

^a ch. 21 : 39.

^b Deut. 33 : 3 ; 2 Kings 4 : 38.

without the sacrifice of principle. (Ver. 22-26 ; 2 Cor. 13 : 8)

25. Expediency is at times allowable, but not always lawful, or productive of the best results. (Ver. 26, 27 ; 1 Cor. 10 : 23 ; 2 Tim. 2 : 24.)

26. In matters not enjoined by Christ and the apostles there may be liberty, but in clearly revealed doctrines and practices there should be no compromise. (Ver. 26, 27 ; Gal. 1 : 8, 10.)

27. The best of intentions may be misunderstood and lead to bad results. (Ver. 27, 28.)

28. The servant may not expect better treatment than his master. (Ver. 28, 36 ; John 15 : 20.)

29. The world notices the company we keep, and draws conclusions concerning us. (Ver. 29 ; Luke 7 : 34.)

30. The wickedness of the heart is seen in the ease with which men engage in a bad cause. (Ver. 30.)

31. Ritualism is one-sided and wrong-sided. The Jews must not pollute the temple, but they could shed innocent blood. (Ver. 31 ; John 18 : 28 ; Matt. 23 : 24.)

32. God watches over his children and suffers nothing to defeat his purpose regarding them. (Ver. 32 ; Luke 12 : 7, 8.)

33. God often makes the governments of this world the protectors of his servants. (Ver. 32, 33 ; 22 : 29.)

34. The wickedness are not agreed, and are inconsistent, as to their opposition to Christ. (Ver. 34.)

35. Many teachers owe their notoriety to the hatred of the world. (Ver. 35, 36 ; 6 : 8-15.)

36. We should be eager to embrace every opportunity for presenting Jesus as a Saviour to the world. (Ver. 37-40 ; 1 Tim. 1 : 15.)

37. The world often entertains unjust and absurd views concerning the people of God. (Ver. 37, 38 ; 14 : 11 ; 17 : 18.)

38. "No man has so good a right to be calm in the storms at sea, or in the midst of popular tumults as the Christian." (DR. P. SCHAEFF.) (Ver. 39, 40 ; 27 : 22-26, 34, 35.)

Ch. 22 : This chapter gives Paul's address before the Jewish mob, in which he relates his birth, training, zeal as a Jew, and his conversion to the faith of Jesus. But the mention of his mission to the Gentiles causes a fresh outburst of fanatical excitement. The chief captain, supposing him guilty of some great crime, proposes to extort a confession by scourging, but Paul escapes the torture by avowing his Roman citizenship. The next day he is brought before the Sanhedrin for examination, May, A. D. 58.

1-21. PAUL'S ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE FROM THE STAIRS OF THE TOWER OF ANTONIA. The second account of Paul's conversion, this one by himself, and naturally the most conciliatory before an excited and prejudiced Jewish audience. The other two accounts are found in 9 : 1-22 ; 26 : 4-20. (See Gal. 1 : 13-16.) Compare preliminary remarks on ch. 9 : 1-22 and the Table comparing the different accounts of Paul's conversion.

1. Men, brethren, fathers—the words used by Stephen in beginning his speech. (See on 7 : 2.) The word *fathers* indicates some members of the Sanhedrin, or at least prominent men, present. Such a respectful beginning was conciliatory.

2. In the Hebrew tongue. (See on 21 : 40.) It is implied that the people would have understood Greek, but were pleased to hear their native tongue. Paul's use of the Hebrew would suggest his loyalty as a Jew, and to the law. By the gesture of his hand he had obtained sufficient silence to be heard (21 : 40) ; but now **they kept the more silent**, a strong expression, implying a subdued quiet, a breathless stillness.

3. Paul first glances at his early life, and zeal in persecuting Christians. (Ver. 3-5.) He shows also his early zeal for the law, which would naturally suggest that their recent outburst against himself was similar to his own former feelings and conduct. **Verily**—omitted

° Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and ^d was zealous toward God, as ye all ⁴ are this day. ° And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women. ⁵ As also the high priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders: ^f from whom also I received letters unto the brethren, and went to Damascus, to bring them which were there bound unto Jerusalem, for to be punished. ⁶ And as it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone

from heaven a great light round about ⁷ me. And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, ⁸ Saul, why persecutest thou me? And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, ⁹ whom thou persecutest. And ^h they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me. And I said, ¹⁰ What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do.

° ch. 5 : 34. ^d ch. 21 : 20. ° ch. 7 : 58; 8 : 3; 26 : 9-11; 1 Thm. 1 : 13. ^f ch. 9 : 2; 26 : 10, 12. ^g ch. 9 : 3-22; 26 : 12, 13. ^h ch. 9 : 7; Dan. 10 : 7.

in the oldest manuscripts. **I am . . . a Jew.** This would correct the impression of any, who, like the chief captain, might think he was one of those foreign desperadoes at that time infesting the country. **Born in Tarsus, in Cilicia.** (See on 21 : 39.) **Brought up in this city**—not indeed from infancy, but from boyhood. At about the age of thirteen, when Jewish boys became children of the Law—perhaps a little earlier—Paul was sent to Jerusalem to be educated. **At the feet.** Pupils were accustomed to sit around their teacher on low benches, or on the floor. (See Luke 10 : 39, and note.) **Gamaliel.** (See on 5 : 34.) **Taught according to the perfect or strict manner of the law.** See the parallel and equivalent passage, 26 : 5, “according to the strictest sect of our religion, I lived a Pharisee.” See his account of his birth, education, and character in Phil. 3 : 4-6. See also Gal. 1 : 14, where he speaks of his pre-eminence among his fellow-students, and his fervent zeal, a zealot even, for the traditions of the fathers. **As ye all are this day.** Thus he puts himself in as acceptable a light as possible before his audience. See 2 Cor. 11 : 22, where Paul compares himself with certain Judaizing Christians.

4. This way—this well-known belief and manner of life, the Christian religion. (See on 9 : 2.) **I persecuted unto death.** (See 26 : 10.) **Binding and delivering into prisons, etc.** (See on 9 : 2.)

5. The high priest, Caiaphas, who held that office when Saul of Tarsus re-

ceived his commission, and who appears still to have been living. (See on 9 : 1.) **All the estate of the elders**—*all the eldership*, one form of designating the Sanhedrin. (See on 9 : 1.) **Unto the brethren**—his Jewish brethren. He speaks as himself a Jew. In 9 : 2 the language is, “to the synagogues.” **Damascus.** (See on 9 : 2.) **Bound unto Jerusalem**—to be tried and punished. (See on 9 : 2.)

6. Paul proceeds to relate his vision near Damascus, which changed the whole course of his life. (Ver. 6-16.) **About noon, etc.** “At midday.” (26 : 13.) See for this verse note on 9 : 3.

7. Heard a voice, etc.—Paul heard the words; those that were with him heard a sound, but it was not intelligible to them. (Ver. 9.) On this verse, see 9 : 4.

8. Of Nazareth—or *the Nazarene*. This title of Jesus is not found in the other two accounts of his conversion. This was fitting before the Jewish audience, as it would specify Jesus, and if his followers were called Nazarenes, as also identifying himself with them. See on 9 : 5 for this verse.

9. And were afraid—not found in the oldest manuscripts, and omitted in the Revised Version. Some old manuscripts have them. They are retained by Alford and Meyer. **Heard not the voice.** (See on ver. 7; also fuller note of 9 : 7.) The Improved Bible Union Version translates, *They did not understand.*

10. What shall I do, Lord? recognizing Jesus as a Divine Master. See on 9 : 6, where the three accounts

11 And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came in to
 12 Damascus. And ¹one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, ²having a good report of all the Jews which dwell *there*,
 13 came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And

the same hour I looked up upon him.
 14 And he said, ¹The God of our fathers, ²hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and ³see ⁴that Just One, and ⁵shouldest hear the voice of his
 15 mouth. ⁶For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of ⁷what thou hast seen and
 16 heard. And now why tarriest thou?

¹ ch. 9 : 17. ² ch. 10 : 22. ³ ch. 3 : 13 ; 5 : 30. ⁴ ch. 9 : 15 ; 26 : 16. ⁵ 1 Cor. 9 : 1 ; 15 : 8.
 ⁶ ch. 3 : 14 ; 7 : 52. ⁷ 1 Cor. 11 : 23 ; Gal. 1 : 12. ⁸ ch. 23 : 11. ⁹ ch. 4 : 20 ; 26 : 16.

are harmonized. At this point he submits his will to Christ.

11. Could not see for the glory of that light. His blindness is recorded in 9 : 8 ; but the reason of his blindness is only given here. How great and glorious the light that outshone the midday sun (ver. 6), and blinded his eyes. Paul evidently caught a view of Christ; and his glory overwhelmed him. (See on 9 : 17. Compare 1 Tim. 6 : 15, 16 ; Heb. 1 : 3 ; John 1 : 14.) Jesus appeared to him not so much as the Son of man (7 : 56), but more as the Son of God. (2 Thess. 1 : 7-10.)

12. One Ananias. See 9 : 10-17, where Luke gives a fuller account of him. Notice, however, that he is there spoken of as a *disciple*, but here as a **devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews** living at Damascus. Paul thus describes him in a way that would be conciliatory and acceptable to his Jewish audience. What such a man said and did, should be favorably received and candidly considered.

13. And stood—rather, *standing by*, or *over me*, as I lay, or sat blind before him. **Brother Saul**, etc. (See on 9 : 17, 18.) **Receive thy sight**, etc.—more exactly, *Look up, and the same hour I looked up upon him*. The verb is the same in both clauses.

14. The God of our fathers—Ananias speaks as a Jew. Stephen used almost the same expression about twenty-four years before. (1 : 2, 32.) There was no need of a rupture with true Judaism, nor did Christians at first expect it. **Hath chosen**, or *appointed thee* beforehand, committed this work and mission to thy hands. **To see the Just or Righteous One**. (1 : 52 ; 1 John 2 : 1.) As Paul actually heard the voice of Jesus, so he actually saw him. (See on 9 : 17.) This put

Paul on a level with the twelve apostles. (1 : 21, 22 ; Gal. 1 : 1. See on 9 : 17.)

15. For thou shalt be his witness, etc. A like commission Jesus had given the eleven apostles. (1 : 8.) **Unto all men**. All classes and races, but Paul does not yet utter the name, "Gentiles." See on 9 : 15, where Jesus reveals these facts regarding Paul to Ananias. Jesus appears also to have made known his commission to Paul. (26 : 16-19. See on 9 : 6.)

16. Why tarriest thou?—Why art thou just on the point of doing, instead of actually doing? Since Jesus has appeared to thee and chosen thee, etc. The language is not of reproof, but of encouragement. For this was what Paul needed, as he felt himself the very chief of sinners. (1 Tim. 1 : 12-16.) Notice that Ananias had also proclaimed the gift of the Holy Spirit to him. (9 : 17.) This Paul appears to have received without the laying on of hands. **Arise**, without delay. The change of position is in harmony with the immersion that he received. **Be baptized and wash away thy sins**. The verbs in the original are in the middle voice, and it is difficult to express their meaning euphoniously. More exactly, *Have thyself baptized, and have thyself bathed away from thy sins*. It is implied, First, that Paul as an intelligent agent had something to purpose and do ; and, Second, that as his baptism was to be administered to him by another, doubtless by Ananias, so his sins were to be washed away by God. As the word *bathe away* has in its literal sense a reference to the bath, a bathing of the whole body, so in its figurative sense it refers to the forgiveness, or cleansing of the sins, of one's whole being. Baptism is the outward sign of repentance and faith (13 : 24), and represents deadness to the world

Arise, and be baptized, ^aand wash away thy sins, ^ccalling on the name of the Lord.

- 17 And it came to pass, that, ^dwhen I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance;
18 and ^esaw him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jeru-

salem: for they will not receive thy testi-
19 mony concerning me. And I said, Lord,
^fthey know that I imprisoned and ^gbeat
in every synagogue them that believed
20 on thee: ^hand when the blood of thy
martyr Stephen was shed, I also was
standing by, and ⁱconsenting unto his
death, and kept the raiment of them that

^{*} Rom. 6: 4; Heb. 10: 22.
9: 1.

^c Rom. 10: 13.
^e Matt. 10: 17.

^h Gal. 1: 18, 19. ⁱ ch. 9: 16. ^j ch. 8: 3;
^a ch. 7: 58. ^b ch. 8: 1.

and newness of life, which implies the forgiveness and cleansing away of sins. The subject is intelligent and active in baptism; but forgiveness is the act and gift of God, which the believer acknowledges and publicly accepts in his baptism. (See on 2: 38. Compare 1 Peter 3: 21.) **Calling on the name of the Lord**—rather, according to the oldest authorities, *calling on his name*, referring back to “the Just One” (ver. 14), recognizing Christ in his baptism. Paul was to profess his allegiance, and vow his devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ in his baptism. Christians were known also as those who called on the name of the Lord. (9: 14; see also 1: 24.) From 9: 18 we learn that this command was immediately obeyed. Observe how Paul, in his conciliatory manner, avoids using the name of Jesus in this place.

17. Paul proceeds to narrate his mission among the Gentiles, which was entirely unsought by himself, and put upon him by divine command. **When I was come**, rather, *returned to Jerusalem*—three years after his conversion, a part of which time he spent in Arabia (Gal. 1: 17, 18), a period doubtless of preparation for his great work. See also 9: 18–29 for other incidents passed over by Paul in his address. **While I prayed in the temple**—another conciliatory remark. A Jewish coloring pervades his whole address. Though a Christian, he was not forgetful of Jerusalem and the temple. One visiting the temple for prayer would not likely be a traitor to his own people, nor a despiser of Jewish ordinances and religious observances. **I was in a trance**. (See on 10: 10.) This was one of the “visions and revelations of the Lord,” mentioned by Paul in 2 Cor. 12: 1.

18. **And saw him**—that is, Christ,

Make haste and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem. The duration of this visit was fifteen days. (Gal. 1: 18.) Paul here gives the supernatural cause of his leaving Jerusalem. In 9: 29, 30, Luke gives the natural cause. The two statements are consistent with each other. (See on 9: 30.) Compare a similar twofold reason, 15: 2 and Gal. 2: 2. **They will not receive thy testimony concerning me**. In this Paul implies that he had come to Jerusalem to preach the gospel to his own countrymen; and he gives the reason why he did not continue in this work.

19. When the Lord commanded him to leave Jerusalem, assuring him that the people would not hear him, Paul remonstrated, urging that he was peculiarly fitted for this work among the Jews, because he was known to them as one who had been a leading persecutor of Christians. The testimony of such an one, he thought, would have special weight. **I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue**, where such punishments were often inflicted. (Matt. 10: 17; Luke 12: 11; 21: 12. See 8: 3; 9: 1, 2.) Such cases were heard on Mondays and Thursdays, and corporal punishment inflicted on the spot.

20. **Thy martyr, or witness**, Stephen. It was not till after the age of the Apostles that the word *martyr* came to be applied to those Christians who sealed their testimony to the truth by their death. The word here and especially in Rev. 17: 6 appears to be in its transition to that meaning. Near the close of the second century the martyrs of Lyons refused the title of *martyr*, regarding it as only appropriate to Christ; or at least only to those who remained constant to the end. (EUSEBIUS, *Hist. Eccles.* v. 2.) **Consenting**—approving and really

21 slew him. And he said unto me, Depart:
 *for I will send thee far hence unto the
 Gentiles.
 22 And they gave him audience unto this
 word, and *then* lifted up their voices, and
 said, ^dAway with such a fellow from the

earth: for it is not fit that ^ehe should
 23 live. And as they cried out, ^fand cast
 off *their* clothes, ^gand threw dust into the
 24 air, the chief captain commanded him to
 be brought into the castle, and bade that
 he should be examined by scourging;

* ch. 9: 15; 13: 2, 46, 47; 18: 6; 26: 17; Rom. 11: 13; 15: 16; Gal. 2: 7, 8; Eph. 3: 7, 8; 1 Tim.
 2: 7. ^d ch. 21: 36. ^e ch. 25: 24. ^f ch. 7: 58. ^g 2 Sam. 16: 13.

taking pleasure in it. The oldest
 manuscripts omit, **unto his death**
 . . . **kept the raiment.** (See on 7: 58.)

21. But his remonstrance proved of
 no avail. The Lord's command is
 positive and peremptory, **Depart**—
 giving no direct answer to his plea.
For I will send thee—implying
 that was his mission, and that the Gen-
 tiles would hear him. Thus Paul
 deferred the utterance of the word
Gentiles as long as possible. And
 now its utterance arouses a storm of
 wrath. Had he not been interrupted,
 doubtless he would have referred, as
 before King Agrippa (26: 19-23), to sub-
 sequent labors, especially among Jews
 and proselytes; to his return to Jeru-
 salem, bringing alms and offerings;
 and to the circumstances of his purifi-
 cation in the temple (24: 17, 18); not
 omitting to present Jesus as the
 Messiah and the hope of Israel (26: 6,
 22, 23); and perhaps to the blessing of
 God upon his labors among the Gentile
 nations.

NOTE. Paul did not come to a full
 knowledge of his Gentile work at
 once. At his conversion he was com-
 missioned, as a minister and witness, to
 Jews as well as Gentiles. (26: 16, 17; Gal.
 1: 16.) During the three years in
 Damascus and Arabia his conceptions
 of the truth were much like those of
 the martyr Stephen. He probably
 labored largely among foreign Jews
 and proselytes, as he afterwards did at
 Jerusalem (7: 29), where they attempted
 to kill him, and he received a renewed
 commission, "I will send thee far
 hence to the Gentiles." (22: 21.) He
 now doubtless obtained enlarged views
 of his work and his mission among the
 Gentiles. In Tarsus, in Cilicia, and at
 Antioch, we believe he extended his
 work among not only proselytes, but
 also among uncircumcised, though
 devout, Gentiles. Another advance
 was made in his work and in his con-

ception of his Gentile mission, when
 the Spirit called for the separation of
 Paul and Barnabas for missionary
 labors among the heathen. (13: 3.) His
 new experiences must have added
 largely to his practical knowledge.
 (13: 12, 46; 14: 27.)

22-30. PAUL PLEADS HIS ROMAN
 CITIZENSHIP, AND ESCAPES SCOURG-
 ING. May, A. D. 58.

22. **Unto this word**—or declara-
 tion, that he was sent by divine com-
 mand to the heathen. **Away with
 such a fellow.** (See on 21: 36.) **It is
 not fit**, rather, according to the oldest
 manuscripts, *It was not fit that he
 should live*, when he was rescued from
 us by the chief captain (21: 33, 34); im-
 plying that he ought to have been put
 to death long ago. The doctrine that
 the Messiah was not exclusively for
 the Jews, and any suggestion that the
 latter might be rejected and preference
 given to the Gentiles, were peculiarly
 distasteful to the Jewish people, espe-
 cially at Jerusalem. (See Luke 4: 26-28; 20:
 15-19; Acts 7: 48-54.)

23. **And cast off their clothes**—
 or *throwing up their outer garments*
 and *casting dust into the air*, indicating
 vehement rage and intense excitement.
 Such demonstrations would tend to
 inflame the minds of the populace, who
 were still gathering, and crowding into
 the temple area. Such expressions of
 anger and scorn are not uncommon
 among Orientals. Compare the act
 of Shimei in casting stones and dust at
 David (2 Sam. 16: 13), and of the friends
 of Job as an expression of grief. (Job
 2: 12.)

24. As Paul had spoken in Hebrew,
 the chief captain was probably ignor-
 ant of the substance of his address,
 and inferred that there was some serious
 charge against him, and that he was
 a peculiarly dangerous and turbulent
 fellow. He therefore determines that
 Paul shall be **examined**, judicially

that he might know wherefore they cried
25 so against him. And as they bound him
with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion
that stood by, ^bIs it lawful for you to
scourge a man that is a Roman, and un-
26 condemned? When the centurion heard
that, he went and told the chief captain,
saying, Take heed what thou doest: for
27 this man is a Roman. Then the chief
captain came, and said unto him, Tell

me, art thou a Roman? He said, Yea.
28 And the chief captain answered, With a
29 great sum obtained I this freedom. And
Paul said, But I was free born. Then
straightway they departed from him
which should have examined him. And
the chief captain also was afraid, ⁱafter
he knew that he was a Roman, and be-
cause he had bound him.

^b ch. 25 : 16.

ⁱ ch. 23 : 27.

by scourging—a cruel method for supplying the want of proof or information, by compelling a person to make a confession, or to accuse himself. **Cried so against him.** Thus the people “shouted” in the praise of Herod (12:22); and uttered an infuriated cry against Jesus. (Luke 23:21.) “Their shouting and crying was a hostile reply to him.” (MEYER.)

25. As they bound him—as they stretched him forward, bent him over to the post, preparatory to receiving the scourge on his bare back. Some translate, *Stretched him out for the whips*, the **thongs** being the leather straps of the scourge, which is not a very common use of the word. Besides, it appears from ver. 29, that they were now binding Paul preparatory to the scourging. **Paul said unto the centurion who stood by**—superintending the binding. A centurion had charge of our Saviour's crucifixion. (Luke 23:47.) **Is it lawful to scourge**, etc. See on 16:37, Paul pleading his Roman citizenship at Philippi.

26. The centurion at once warns the chief captain. **Take heed.** Omitted by the highest critical authorities. Translate, *What art thou about to do? for this man is a Roman.*

27. Art thou a Roman? The pronoun is emphatic, showing the surprise of the chief captain at hearing that the accused Jew before him was a Roman citizen. **He said, Yea.** This simple affirmation was sufficient, and it was at once allowed. The claim, if false, was punishable with death. Besides, in this case, Paul may have had papers, and probably could give references in the city in proof of his citizenship.

28. Still surprised, the chief captain continues, **With a great sum ob-**

tained I this freedom, this right of citizenship. “The tribune, to whom it was known that a native of Tarsus had not, *as such*, the right of citizenship, thinks that Paul must probably have come to it by purchase, and yet for this the arrested Cilician appears to him too poor.” The power of granting citizenship rested solely with the emperor. Under the first Cæsars it was obtained with great difficulty, and at great cost. But under Claudius, about ten years before this time, it was sold freely and cheaply by his infamous wife, Messalina, who was put to death, A. D. 48. With calm dignity Paul replies, **But I was free born**, a Roman by birth. It was not a local, but a family distinction, which Paul enjoyed. Tarsus was a free city, but that did not constitute its inhabitants Roman citizens. It is probable that Paul's father or grandfather had obtained this distinction for meritorious service, or through purchase, and hence Paul was born a citizen.

29. The soldiers who were about to examine Paul (a mild way of expressing a judicial investigation by scourging) withdrew, without further orders, as soon as they heard that he was a Roman. The chief captain was also afraid, showing the power of that simple declaration, “I am a Roman.” **Because he had bound him**—for the purpose of torture. The binding here does not refer to his having been bound with chains as a prisoner, for this was permitted in the case of Romans. The next verse shows that after Paul was unloosed from the whipping post, he was still kept bound as a prisoner. So do also 26:29; 28:20; Phil. 1:7, 13-16; Col. 4:18; Philem. 10, 13.

30. The chief captain was disposed

Paul's defence before the Sanhedrin; and second rescue by the Roman soldiers.

30 On the morrow, because he would have known the certainty wherefore he was accused of the Jews, he loosed him from

his bands, and commanded the chief priests and all their council to appear; and brought Paul down, and set him before them.

to do his duty, but was greatly perplexed. He could not learn the charges against Paul, either from the mob, or from his address. It was unlawful to extort a confession from a Roman. He determines to make another effort by bringing him before the Sanhedrin for examination, not only that justice may be done, but also that he may be able to state the case to Felix. (23: 26-30.) **From his bands** is not found in the oldest manuscripts. Simply, **he loosed, or released him.** **He commanded . . . all their council, or Sanhedrin, to appear,** rather, *to come together.* (See on 4: 5.) He may have learned that the charges against Paul had reference to the religion of the Jews, and so he summons their highest ecclesiastical court. **Brought Paul down**—from the tower of Antonia (21: 23) to the chamber, where the Sanhedrin held its meeting, which had formerly been held in the temple, but now appears to have been held in a hall on Mount Zion, near the foot of the bridge leading over the ravine from the western cloister of the temple. (See on 23: 15.) It appears also that the chief captain left Paul in charge of the Sanhedrin (23: 10), but was near enough to watch proceedings and protect Paul from violence. (See Lewin 2, 149.) The authority of Roman power appears in the command of the chief captain, and in the whole narrative.

PRACTICAL REMARKS.

1. Christian experience is the best argument against unbelief. (Ver. 1-16; 11: 4 f.)
2. The Christian should meet opposition with tact and a conciliatory spirit. (Ver. 2, 3, 12, 13; 2 Cor. 12: 14-18.)
3. The true penitent is anxious to know and do the will of the Lord. (Ver. 10; Matt. 3: 6-9.)
4. We are not prepared in our natural state to behold the glory of Christ. (Ver. 11; 7: 55, 56.)
5. As soon as we accept of Jesus we enter the Christian brotherhood, and become joint-

heirs with Christ. (Ver. 13; Rom. 5: 1, 2; 8: 14, 15.)

6. Ministers of the gospel may not always choose their fields of labor. God may overrule their preference, and send them where he knows it is best for them to go. (Ver. 18-21; 16: 6-10; John 3: 2.)

7. For further practical thoughts on ver. 1-21, see chapter 9, Practical Remarks, 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 12, 14, 15, 18, 19, 20.)

8. Sin and prejudice will shut the heart against the most powerful presentations of truth. (Ver. 22; John 2: 11; Luke 16: 31.)

9. Spiritual delusions and religious fanaticism make men like fierce brutes. (Ver. 23, Jude 10.)

10. How often does the world condemn the godly and spiritual matters, blindly and without investigation. (Ver. 24; 3: 15, 17.)

11. A person in becoming a Christian does not forfeit his rights as a citizen. (Ver. 25; Matt. 22: 21; Rom. 13: 1-4.)

12. Yet the Christian has a higher citizenship in heaven. (Ver. 25-28; Eph. 2: 19; Phil. 3: 20.)

13. If it was an offence against the dignity of Rome to inflict ignominy upon one of its citizens, how much greater the offense against Christ to injure one of the citizens of his heavenly kingdom? (Ver. 28; Matt. 25: 45.)

14. A good man will investigate, and welcome honest investigation. (Ver. 30; 25: 11.)

Ch. 23. This chapter contains the account of Paul before the Sanhedrin, the plot to assassinate him, and his hasty but safe conduct as a prisoner to Felix the governor, at Cæsarea. Thus in the providence of God it would appear that Paul, as the apostle to the Gentiles, was to make his last appeal to Israel before he was transferred to the metropolis of the heathen world. He is rejected by the people (last chapter), and by the Sanhedrin, and the Jewish leaders; and is delivered over to the Roman authorities, both for safe-keeping and for trial.

1-10. **PAUL'S DEFENSE BEFORE THE SANHEDRIN. HIS SECOND RESCUE**

23 And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men and brethren,^k I have lived in all good conscience before God

2 until this day. And the high priest Ananias commanded them that stood by 3 him^l to smite him on the mouth. Then

* ch. 24 : 16 ; 2 Cor. 1 : 12 ; 4 : 2 ; Heb. 13 : 18 ; 1 John 3 : 21. ¹ 1 Kings 22 : 24 ; Eccles. 3 : 16 ; Jer. 20 : 2 ; John 18 : 22.

FROM THE JEWS BY ROMAN SOLDIERS. (Rom. 13 : 1, 6, 7 ; Exod. 22 : 28.) May, A. D. 58. This section begins properly with the last verse of the preceding chapter.

1. Paul earnestly beholding the council. The same verb is used to describe the steadfast gaze of the disciples at Jesus ascending (1:10); the intent look of Stephen into heaven (7:57); and the fixed look of Peter upon the lame man. (3:4.) It is one of the peculiarities of Luke to record the look or gesture of the persons who speak. (21:40.) Paul scrutinizes the council or *Sanhedrin*, reminding him of former days, when he was a member (26:10), or at least a confidential and trusted agent. Probably he saw some whom he had known over twenty years before. Notice he does not address them as *fathers* (22:1), but simply, *Men, brethren*, as an equal, and with the consciousness that he had in no wise forfeited his religious character, and position in the theocracy. Paul's defense is concentrated into a single sentence. Knowing that the Jewish leaders regarded him as an apostate from the Mosaic law, and a subverter of Jewish customs, he says, **I have lived, conducted myself unto God, in his service and for his glory, in all good conscience**, with a full consciousness of rectitude, faithfulness, and sincerity, **until this day**. The Jews had so regarded him up to the time of his conversion to Christianity; but he affirms that his conduct had been such up to that very day. The verb translated *lived* means to *behave as a citizen*, here, of Israel, or more freely, to live according to the laws of God. Before his conversion he acted sincerely (26:9), though ignorantly through unbelief, and, as he thought, for the glory of God. (1 Tim. 1 : 5, 18 ; 2 Tim. 1 : 3.) After his conversion he had "a conscience void of offence" (24:16), whose testimony he enjoyed "in simplicity and godly sincerity." (2 Cor. 1 : 12. Compare Heb. 13 : 12 ; 1 Peter 3 : 15, 16.)

2 Ananias—the son of Nebedaeus, appointed high-priest, in A. D. 48. In A. D. 52 he was sent to Rome on a charge of oppression brought against him by the Samaritans, but was acquitted. He appears to have resumed his office, but was deposed in A. D. 59, shortly before Felix quitted his government, and was assassinated by the Sicarii, or robbers, at the beginning of the last Jewish war. (Josephus *Ant.*, xx. 2, 1; 6, 2; 9, 2.) He was a very bad specimen of a worldly Sadducee. "The Talmud adds to our picture of him that he was a rapacious tyrant, who in his gluttony and greed, reduced the inferior priests almost to starvation by defrauding them of their tithes." (FARRAR, *Life of St. Paul*, p. 539.) His lawless conduct toward Paul was in harmony with his character. **To smite him on the mouth**—an Oriental mode of silencing a speaker, implying that what he had said was false and presumptuous. The same mode is practiced at the present day in Eastern courts. Compare a similar insult offered to Jesus, while standing before the Sanhedrin. (John 18 : 22; also 1 Kings 22 : 24.) Paul's calling the Jewish rulers "brethren," and especially his assertion of having lived according to the laws of God, appears to have enraged the high priest.

3. Paul showed much spirit, which has been contrasted with the mild and patient conduct of Jesus under similar circumstances. **God shall smite thee, thou whitened wall**, thou hypocrite, pretending to act as an officer of justice with a spirit of lawless injustice; fair outside, but filthy within, like the whitened walls of a sepulchre. (See on Matt. 23 : 27.) These were words of righteous indignation. So Jesus on several occasions uttered scathing woes upon hypocrites, and also drove the money changers from the temple. (Matt. 23 : 13-33 ; John 2 : 14-16.) Paul's words also were prophetic. *God is about to smite thee*. In less than two years Ananias was deposed, and at length came to a

said Paul unto him, God shall smite thee, **4** *thou whited wall!* For sittest thou to judge me after the law, and ^mcommandest me to be smitten contrary to the law? **5** And they that stood by said, Revilest thou God's high priest? Then said Paul,

I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest: for it is written, ⁿ*'Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people.'*

6 But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men and

^m Dent. 25 : 1, 2; John 7 : 51.

ⁿ Exod. 22 : 28; Eccles. 10 : 20.

violent death. (See on ver. 2.) (Josephus, *Wars* II, 17, 9.) **For sittest thou,** etc. Better, *And dost thou sit*, being such an one, accountable to God and whose judgment upon thee is assured, *judging me according to the law*, etc. **Contrary to the law, or lawlessly.** The high priest was not the only judge; all the members of the Sanhedrin were judges. He had taken the case in his own hands, and illegally decided the case before Paul had been heard. (John 7 : 51.) The Mosaic law required careful investigation before punishment, and permitted the accused the right to be heard in his own defence. (Lev. 19 : 35; Deut. 19 : 15, 17, 18; 25 : 1.)

4. God's high priest—as God's representative in administering justice. (Deut. 17 : 13.) His office was also sacred, appointed by God. (Lev. 8 : 1, 2.)

5. I wist not—*I knew not*, etc. Several explanations of this language have been given. Some suppose that from defective sight he could not distinguish persons at a little distance. Great stress is laid upon such passages as 9 : 8; Gal. 4 : 15; 6 : 11; 2 Cor. 12 : 7. Others, that he spoke ironically, which is not in keeping with the quotation of Scripture that follows. Others still suppose that Paul, on account of the troublous times, did not know who was high priest; or, that at that moment, he did not regard him so much as the high priest as the civil judge, the idea of the high priest being absorbed in that of the *judge*. It is best to take the language in its natural meaning. For some reason Paul did not know that the person commanding him to be smitten on the mouth was high priest. There had been several changes since the time when Paul was familiar with the Sanhedrin. The high priest may not have been in his official robes, or not in his usual seat. At his age, about fifty-six, his sight might have begun to fail from natural

causes. Besides, such a lawless command surprised him, and would not suggest that the high priest was the author of it. His apology is calm, frank, and Christlike, even if his previous conduct had been too impulsive. But notice, he apologizes, not to the man, but to the office; not to the judge even, but to the high priest. He retracts nothing, except impliedly, that he would not have addressed knowingly the high priest as a "whited wall," or hypocrite. Thus the prophetic utterance, "God shall smite thee," remains. And to show his sincere desire to act, according to the law he quotes from Exod. 22 : 28, **Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people.** The quotation is from the Septuagint and gives the substantial meaning of the Hebrew.

6. But when Paul perceived, rather, *knew that one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees.* These were the two great religious parties, or sects of the Jews; the former sceptical, the latter orthodox. (See on 4 : 1; 5 : 17, 34.) They were bitterly opposed to each other. The two parties may have been in separate groups, the majority being Pharisees. Seeing that there was no prospect of a calm and fair hearing, Paul resorts to a legitimate means of dividing their forces, and turning their attention to a fundamental truth in which he and the Pharisees agreed. **I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee**, or, according to the best authorities, *a son of Pharisees*; not only by birth, but his family had, for generations, belonged to that party. So far as he believed in the doctrine of the resurrection, in the coming and kingdom of the Messiah, in angels and spirits, and in the whole Old Testament Scriptures, he was a Pharisee. "As touching the law a Pharisee." (Phil. 3 : 6.) He indeed went beyond the Pharisees in under-

brethren, ^o I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of ^p the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question.

- 7 And when he had so said, there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees: and the multitude was divided. ^q For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both. And there arose a great cry; and the scribes *that were of the Pharisees' part* arose, and

strove, saying, ^r We find no evil in this man: but if a spirit or an angel hath spoken to him, ^s let us not fight against God. And when there arose a great dissension, the chief captain, fearing lest Paul should have been pulled in pieces of them, commanded the soldiers to go down, and take him by force from among th ^t to bring *him* into the castle.

^o ch. 26 : 5; Phil. 3 : 5.

^p ch. 24 : 15, 21; 26 : 6-8; 28 : 20.

^q ch. 4 : 1, 2; Mark 12 : 18.

^r ch. 25 : 25; 26 : 31.

^s ch. 5 : 39.

standing the Scriptures, and applying them to Jesus, as the Christ. **Of the hope and resurrection of the dead**—of the hope of a Messiah, whose salvation culminates in a resurrection from the dead. (24:15.) Or, perhaps preferable, by a figure of speech, *Of the hope*, namely, *of the resurrection*. So the *Improved Bible Union Version*, concerning the hope and the resurrection of the dead *I am now judged*, or called in question. (See 1 Cor. 15 : 12-19.) Paul showed great skill in this utterance. It was also an appeal to the Pharisees who agreed with him so far, to listen further; and to call forth their sympathy and defence. He had no hopes of leniency from the Sadducees, his most violent and contemptuous opposers; but he could hope for some sympathy from the Pharisees, who were sincere in unbelief, but who held many doctrines in common with himself. His professions as a Pharisee implied that he was not a subverter of the Mosaic law and customs.

7. There arose a dissension—an actual *strife*, in regard to Paul. The Pharisees saw that Paul was with them in their leading doctrinal views, and they hesitate to join the Sadducees to put him to death. **And the multitude, of those assembled, were divided**, taking opposite sides.

8. Luke explains the effect of Paul's appeal by stating the fundamental difference between these parties. His description agrees with that of Josephus, who says, "The Sadducees reject the existence of the soul after death, and the rewards and punishments of the invisible world." And again, "The Sadducees hold that the souls of men perish with their bodies."

Also, that the Pharisees hold that "The souls of men have an immortal strength, and are destined to be rewarded or punished in another state according to the life here, as it has been one of virtue or vice." (*Jewish War*, II, 8, 14; *Antiq.* XVIII, 1, 3, 4.) The Sadducees accepted the Pentateuch which often speaks of angels, but they appear to have explained such appearances as some manifestation of the divine glory. Politically, they rather sided with Rome, and sometimes were found uniting with the Herodians. **The Pharisees confess both**—the resurrection and the existence of spiritual beings, *angel and spirit* being included in one idea.

9. There arose a great cry, or clamor, as of an excited mob. **And the scribes**, or according to some of the best manuscripts, *Some of the scribes of the Pharisees' part*, or party, espoused the side of Paul. It was fitting that their learned men and guardians of the law (4:5) should take a leading part. **Let us not fight against God.** These words are wanting in the oldest manuscripts and versions, leaving the sentence as an unfinished exclamation. Luke has other instances of incomplete sentences. (Luke 13 : 9; 19 : 42; 22 : 42.) **But if a spirit, etc., or But what if a spirit spoke to him, or an angel!** Referring to Paul's statement in 22 : 17, 18. As the Sadducees did not believe in spirits or angels, the Pharisees pause in their argument, and with gestures imply, that believing as they did, the matter in that case was significant, and required caution.

10. A scene of wild excitement, a great dissension ensues. The previous excited feelings regarding Paul

11 And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, ^u Be of good cheer, Paul: ^z for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.

Conspiracy to slay Paul; he is sent to Felix at Cæsarea.

12 AND when it was day, ^γ certain of the Jews banded together, and bound themselves under a curse, saying, ^z that they

would neither eat or drink till they had killed Paul. And they were more than forty which had made this conspiracy. 14 And they came to the chief priests and elders, and said, We have bound ourselves under a great curse, that we will eat nothing until we have slain Paul. 15 Now therefore ye with the council signify to the chief captain ^a that he bring him down unto you to-morrow, as though he would inquire something more perfectly

^t ch. 27 : 23, 24. ^u Isa. 41 : 10; Jer. 15 : 21.
^z 2 Cor. 11 : 26.

^a ch. 22 : 18. ^γ ver. 21 : 30; ch. 25 : 3.
^z ch. 25 : 3.

prepared the way; and party feelings and prejudices combined to make the tumult more intense, especially on the part of the Sadducees, who were jealous of the Pharisees, as well as violent in their hatred of Christians. (4:1-3.) **Lest Paul should have been pulled or torn in pieces.** Both parties seize him, some to protect, others to vent their wrath. But the chief captain quickly comes with his soldiers to his rescue. Doubtless they were in readiness, while he himself with an officer was present to learn the result of the investigation. We can not suppose that he presided at the meeting of the Sanhedrin.

11-22. A CONSPIRACY TO SLAY PAUL. ITS DISCLOSURE TO THE CHIEF CAPTAIN. May A. D. 58.

11. After the terrible ordeal of the past two days, Paul needed the divine encouragement, **Be of good cheer.** **The Lord Jesus stood by him**—descriptive of an actual appearance, but whether in a dream or a waking vision is not told us; probably the latter. Compare his visions at Troas (16:9, 10), and at Corinth. (18:9, 10.) **Thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem**—as he had wished, but had been rejected according to the word of the Lord. (22:19-21.) **So must thou bear witness at Rome**—so he should escape from the Jews at Jerusalem. How must this promise have cheered him through all the changes that befell him, during his imprisonment at Cæsarea, and his voyage to Rome! **So.** May there not be a suggestion that he should testify in bonds at Rome as he had at Jerusalem. It had been his long desire and purpose to labor at Rome. (19:21.) A few months before

this he had written to the Roman Christians of his "longing to see them" and of his intentions to visit them. (Rom. 1:11-13; 15:28.)

12. While Paul is thus comforted some of the Jews are plotting his destruction. The highest critical authorities omit **Certain of**. The men who thus banded themselves together, were doubtless Sadducees, with some bitter opponents from Asia Minor, and zealots whose fanaticism is recorded by Josephus. **Bound themselves under a curse**—under an anathema (see Gal. 1:8, 9), which they invoked on themselves in the event of violating, or not carrying out, their vow.

13. **More than forty**—indicating a great and widespread popular excitement against Paul.

14. **They came to the chief priests and elders**—naturally to the Sadducean portion of the Sanhedrin—Ananias and his friends. (Ver. 2.) **We have bound**, etc. Literally, *We have cursed ourselves with a curse*—a strong expression, showing how solemnly and deliberately they engaged in the task, as a service offered to God. (John 16:2.) **Will eat nothing**—even *will taste nothing*. (See 1 Sam. 14:21.) Josephus tells of a similar plot to kill Herod. (*Antiq.* xv. 8:3, 4.)

15. **Now, therefore, ye with the council.** The chief priests and elders (ver. 14) are still to be regarded as the prime movers in this nefarious plot. They were to influence the Sanhedrin to ask for Paul; but not necessarily to divulge all their plans. This would hardly be safe, especially in the hearing of some of the Pharisees who had lately espoused the side of Paul. (Ver. 8.) Such proceedings against apostates ac-

concerning him : and we, or ever he come near, are ready to kill him.

16 ^b And when Paul's sister's son heard of their lying in wait, he went and entered into the castle, and told Paul. Then Paul called one of the centurions unto *him*, and said, Bring this young man unto the chief captain : for he hath a certain thing to tell him. So he took him, and brought *him* to the chief captain, and said, Paul the prisoner called me unto *him*, and prayed me to bring this young man unto thee, who hath something to say unto thee. Then the chief captain took him

by the hand, and went *with him* aside privately, and asked *him*, What is that thou hast to tell me? And he said, ^c The Jews have agreed to desire thee that thou wouldest bring down Paul to-morrow into the council, as though they would inquire somewhat of him more perfectly. 21 But do not thou yield unto them : for there lie in wait for him of them more than forty men, which have bound themselves with an oath, that they will neither eat or drink till they have killed him : and now are they ready, looking for a

^b Job 5 : 13 ; Prov. 21 : 30 ; Lam. 3 : 37.

^c ver. 12 ; Ps. 12 : 2.

corded with Jewish opinions and proceedings. Dr. Hackett quotes from Philo, the noted Alexandrian Jew, who wrote in this age : "It is highly proper that all who have a zeal for virtue should have a right to punish with their own hands, without delay those who are guilty of this crime (that is, forsaking what they regarded the true worship of God) ; not carrying them before . . . any magistrate, but they should indulge the abhorrence of evil, the love of God they entertain, by inflicting immediate punishment on such impious apostates, regarding themselves for the time as everything—senators, judges, prætors, sergeants, accusers, witnesses, the laws of the people ; so that hindered by nothing, they may without fear and with all promptitude espouse the cause of piety." **And we, or ever he come near**—better, *And we before he comes near*—showing that the usual meeting-place of the Sanhedrin, was farther than the area of the temple. (See on 22 : 30.)

16. It is not strange that a conspiracy involving so many persons, against one about whom the whole community was intensely excited, should have become known to some outside of those immediately concerned. Nothing more is known of **Paul's sister's son**. He may have been studying at Jerusalem, like Paul years before, and thus in a position to hear the secrets of the Jewish leaders. This incident shows that all of Paul's family were not alienated from him. Some of Paul's kinsmen were Christians. (Rom. 16 : 7.) Had this one been, doubtless Luke would have mentioned it. We may

hope that he learned from his uncle the truth as it is in Christ. In this case God used natural affection for Paul's safety.

17. **Then Paul called, etc.** As he was under military guard he would have no trouble in sending a message by a soldier. **A certain thing—better, something to tell him.** The divine promise (ver. 11) led him to use every means of safety with hopefulness. He shows considerable wisdom and executive ability.

18. **Paul the prisoner—the one bound**, indicating that he may have been bound to a soldier, and could thus easily send the message to the centurion. Paul often applied this term to himself. (Eph. 3 : 1 ; 4 : 1 ; 2 Tim. 1 : 8 ; Philem. 1, 9, 13.)

19. Everything in connection with this incident moves on with soldier-like order, promptness, and obedience. As well as being a Roman citizen, Paul was gaining a certain influence by personal power and character. **Took him by the hand**—kindly to lead him aside. "To encourage the youth." (BENGEL.)

20. **The Jews have agreed, etc.** (See ver. 12-15.) Paul's nephew speaks in a popular way as he understood it. **As though they would inquire**—as if the Sanhedrin would more thoroughly investigate the matter. The Revised Version translates, *As though thou wouldest inquire* ; as in the former meeting. (22 : 30.)

21. **For there lie in wait . . . looking for a promise from thee**—an assent to their proposal. The conspiracy was so completely arranged and assured, that Paul's nephew speaks of its details as a matter of fact. What

22 promise from thee. So the chief captain *then* let the young man depart, and charged *him*, *See thou* tell no man that thou hast showed these things to me.
 23 And he called unto *him* two centurions, saying, Make ready two hundred soldiers to go to Cæsarea, and horsemen three-

score and ten, and spearmen two hundred, 24 at the third hour of the night; and provide *them* beasts, that they may set Paul on, and bring *him* safe unto Felix the governor.

25 And he wrote a letter after this manner: Claudius Lysias unto the most ex-

was about to take place the next morning is present to his mind.

22. See thou tell no man. The chief captain enjoins secrecy, because he would at once send Paul away; and he would not have the Jews know the real cause of the step taken, nor excite their prejudices against himself, or against the young man.

23-35. PAUL IS SENT TO FELIX AT CÆSAREA. THE LETTER OF LYSIAS, THE ROMAN COMMANDER. May, A. D. 58. The prompt action of Lysias shows his honesty of purpose. Had he been disposed to please the Jews, he could have allowed Paul to become a victim to their malice; or he would have sent Paul to the Sanhedrin under a strong guard and thus displayed his own power.

23. The chief captain felt that an exigency had come. He must act vigorously and at once. **He called unto him two centurions**—more exactly, *some two centurions*, meaning about two, but not less than two, equivalent to *two or three*. **Two hundred soldiers**—the common foot soldiers. The seventy **horsemen** were the ordinary Roman cavalry. The two hundred **spearmen** are not so easily identified. The word is rare in the Greek, and means literally those who *grasp the weapon with the right hand*, such as spearmen or lancers or casters of the javelin. They were probably light armed troops, distinguished from heavy infantry and cavalry. The number of the troops, four hundred and seventy, indicates the danger arising from the popular excitement and the fanaticism of the Jews, as well as from the assassins or robbers who infested the country. The chief captain's order is urgent: **Make ready**, etc., *Forthwith make ready to march*, etc. *The third hour of the night*; nine o'clock. The days, about May 26, were near the longest. Paul's nephew probably brought his message in the afternoon, perhaps

late in the day. There was no time to lose, in order to avoid violence and complication with the Jews.

24. And provide them beasts—several being needed to relieve one another in a hurried march, and perhaps in carrying baggage. **Felix, the governor**, or *procurator* of Judea, appointed in the autumn of A. D. 52, and recalled to Rome in the summer of A. D. 60. (24: 27.) He and his brother Pallas were originally slaves, and afterward freemen in the house of the mother of the Emperor Claudius. Pallas became a favorite of the emperor, and through his influence Felix was appointed procurator of Judea, and retained his position several years under Nero after the death of Claudius. Felix was connected with the Herodian family by his marriage to Drusilla, the daughter of Herod Agrippa I. (24: 24.) He was a man of great energy, but avaricious, cruel, and licentious. Tacitus says of him (*Hist.* V. 9): "He used the power of a king with the temper of a slave, with every kind of cruelty and licentiousness." With this agrees the narrative of Josephus, who represents his administration as attended with troubles and seditions on the one hand, and cruelty, corruption, and profligacy on the other.

25. He wrote a letter after this manner, or *having this form*. Whether the letter was written in Latin or Greek cannot be positively known; but it is implied that its meaning is faithfully given. It was a judicial document which Felix would naturally preserve for reference. Luke was with Paul more or less during his two years' imprisonment at Cæsarea, and as he was searching diligently into the beginnings of Christianity (Luke 1: 1-4), we may well believe that he in some way saw and copied it, or obtained its purport. Paul himself very likely learned its contents from Felix in his frequent conversations with him. (24: 26.) The

cellent governor Felix *sends* greet-
 27 ing. ^a This man was taken of the Jews,
 and should have been killed of them;
 then came I with an army, and rescued
 him, having understood that he was a
 28 Roman. ^e And when I would have known
 the cause wherefore they accused him, I
 brought him forth into their council:
 29 whom I perceived to be accused ^f of ques-

tions of their law, ^g but to have nothing
 laid to his charge worthy of death or of
 30 bonds. And ^h when it was told me how
 that the Jews laid wait for the man, I
 sent straightway to thee, and ⁱ gave com-
 mandment to his accusers also to say
 before thee what *they had* against him.
 Farewell.

31 Then the soldiers, as it was commanded

^a ch. 21 : 33; 24 : 7.

^e ch. 22 : 30.

^f ch. 18 : 15; 25 : 19.

^g ch. 26 : 31.

^h ver. 20.

ⁱ ch. 2 : 8.

letter was in accordance with the Roman law, which required a subordinate officer, in sending a prisoner to the higher authority for trial, to send a written statement of the case. On this case it is rather in favor of Paul, than against him.

26. Claudius was probably the Latin name which the chief captain assumed in purchasing his right to citizenship (22 : 28); and Lysias may have been his original Greek name. We know nothing of him beyond what is recorded in the Acts. **Most excellent**—an appellation addressed to men of conspicuous rank or office, and a title usually given to a governor. (24 : 3; 26 : 25. See Luke 1 : 4.)

27. This man, the more respectful word for *man* is used in the original, doubtless because he was about to speak of Paul as a Roman citizen. The same distinction exists in the Latin words for man. **Having understood that he was a Roman.** This Lysias gives as the reason for rescuing him, whereas he knew nothing of the fact till he had seized Paul and was prepared to scourge him. Military officers commonly love to make as favorable reports of their achievements as possible to their superiors, and so Lysias claims credit for rescuing a Roman citizen. The claim was false in the first instance (21 : 31, 32 : 22 : 23), but true in the second, when Paul was amid the exciting fury of the Sanhedrin. (Ver. 10.) But as Paul *was taken or seized* by the Jews in the first instance, the most favorable construction that can be put upon Lysias' language is, that he speaks loosely and with equivocation. He evidently wished to throw a veil over his first grave mistake and its subsequent correction. In this deviation from the

truth we see an evidence of the genuineness of the letter.

28. When I would have known, etc.—better, *And wishing to know the crime*, which the Jews claimed to be worthy of death. (22 : 22.) Lysias had proposed to learn this by scourging (22 : 24), but he passes this in silence, and refers to his attempt through the Sanhedrin. (22 : 30.)

29. Whom I perceived—rather, *Whom I found accused* of crimes, *relating to questions*, or discussions, *of their law*. These seemed of small importance to the Roman commander, as they had previously to Gallio at Corinth (18 : 15); and he affirms that they were worthy neither of death, the highest penalty of the law, nor of bonds, the lowest.

30. That the Jews—omitted by the highest critical authorities. Translate, *And it being shown me that there was about to be a plot against the man*, though regarding him innocent, *I sent him to thee forthwith*, as a means of safety, and because thou art a fitter person than myself to deal with such a case. **To say before thee**, etc. Or, according to many ancient authorities, *to speak against him before thee*. **Farewell**—the usual ending of a Greek epistle. (See on 15 : 29.) The word is omitted in some ancient manuscripts, but found in others.

31. The soldiers would promptly obey the order, and brought Paul **by night to Antipatris**, having made a rapid march of about thirty-eight miles, northwest from Jerusalem, arriving probably about 6 A. M. Josephus says that the old name was Caphar Saba (town of Saba), and that when Herod the Great rebuilt the city, he changed the name to Antipatris in honor of his father Antipater. (*Antiq.*

them, took Paul, and brought him by night to Antipatris. On the morrow they left the horsemen to go with him, and returned to the castle: who, when they came to Cæsarea, and delivered the epistle to the governor, presented Paul also before him. And when the governor had

read the letter, he asked of what province he was. And when he understood that he was of Cilicia; I will hear thee, said he, when thine accusers are also come. And he commanded him to be kept in Herod's judgment hall.

^k ch. 21 : 39.

^l ch. 24 : 1, 10; 25 : 16.

^m Matt. 27 : 27.

xvi. 5 : 2.) The soldiers would probably take the shortest and most direct route by Gophna, over the paved Roman road. The modern *Kefr Saba* has been regarded as the site of Antipatris, upon a slight eminence on the last line of hills which overlook the plain of Sharon. Captain Condor puts it a few miles further south, at the ruined site of Ras el Ain in the plain of Sharon, where the river Avian gushes forth a full-sized stream. (*Twenty-one Years' Work in the Holy Land*, pp. 86, 87.)

32. On the morrow—after resting a few hours the footmen and laneers return doubtless more leisurely to the castle, where they might be needed if any tumult arose. The seventy horsemen were a sufficient guard for the rest of the journey, as Paul was now out of reach of pursuit.

33. Who—the horsemen. **Came**, or entered into Cæsarea, having probably passed over the twenty-six miles from Antipatris in four or five hours. Cæsarea was the headquarters of the Roman Governor. (See on 8 : 40.)

34. And when the governor had read the letter. According to the oldest manuscripts, simply, *And having read it he asked.* His first question would naturally be, **Of what province he was**, so as to decide whether to send him to some other proœurator, or to a proœonsul. So Pilate learned that Jesus was a Galilean, and sent him to Herod. (Luke 23 : 6, 7.) **And when he understood**—having learned from the centurions, or from Paul himself, that he was of Cilicia. (See on 6 : 9.) At one time Cilicia was attached to the province of Syria, and possibly may have been at this time, and this perhaps may explain why Felix without further question decided to hear the case.

35. I will hear thee fully. According to Roman law a case thus

sent up from a lower to a higher court must be fully heard anew. If Cilicia was a separate province at that time, Felix doubtless inferred from the letter of Lysias, that Paul's ease was not of sufficient importance to send him thither. (See preceding verse.) **In Herod's judgment hall**—literally, *the prætorium of Herod*; that is, the palace built by Herod the Great, and now occupied as the residence of the governor. It would seem that some apartment of the edifice, within its precincts, was set apart for the imprisonment of state prisoners. From this verse and from 24 : 23, 24, it appears that Paul was not treated as a common prisoner, and that he was near at hand. He was "a Roman and uncondemned," and must not be treated with needless severity.

PRACTICAL REMARKS.

1. A good conscience is a precious boon, a director, a comfort, and a defence, but not always an infallible guide. (Ver. 1; 24 : 16; Rom. 2 : 15; 1 Tim. 4 : 3.)

2. How often, like Paul, are Christians made partakers of the sufferings of Christ, by insults from a wicked world. (Ver. 2; 5 : 28; John 18 : 22; 1 Tim. 6 : 13.)

3. There is enough in Paul's example to follow, without claiming for him absolute perfection, or imitating his impetuousness of temper. (Ver. 3; 1 Cor. 11 : 1.)

4. We should revere a divinely appointed office. The claims of too many, however, are not sustained by God's word. (Ver. 4, 5; 3 John 5-8; 2 Tim. 4 : 3.)

5. The Christian may at times act from policy and prudence. Paul thus divided his foes, and showed his innocence to the chief captain. (Ver. 6-9; 2 Cor. 12 : 16.)

6. When we find truth mixed with erroneous doctrines and practices, we can often utilize it to advantage. (Ver. 6; John 4 : 20, 21.)

7. The contention of sects sometimes gives

Paul's trial before Felix; and imprisonment for two years at Cesarrea.

24 AND after five days ^a Ananias the high

priest descended with the elders, and with a certain orator named Tertullus, who informed the governor against Paul.

^a ch. 23 : 2, 30, 35 ; 25 : 2.

opportunity for the presentation and growth of truth. (Ver. 6-9.)

8. The opposers of Christ are actuated by a common hatred to truth, but their motives are selfish, and they have no permanent bond of union. (Ver. 10; Luke 23 : 12.)

9. The Lord gives blessing, grace, and promises to his afflicted people, as they need them. (Ver. 11; 2 Cor. 12 : 9.)

10. To what lengths religious fanaticism leads! to infuriated malice, wicked oaths, and deliberately planned murder. (Ver. 12, 13; Matt. 27 : 25.)

11. Too often have the professed leaders of God's people joined in with Christ's enemies as persecutors. (Ver. 14; 9 : 1, 2.)

12. Righteousness and justice have indeed fallen when God's people can resort to deception and conspiracies. (Ver. 15; Ps. 37 : 12.)

13. The Lord's promise to be with his servants is a pledge of all necessary providential deliverances. (Ver. 11, 16; 18 : 9, 10.)

14. The promises of God do not exempt us from the use of ordinary means in attaining the object. (Ver. 16-21; 27 : 25, 43, 44.)

15. The Lord often, in an unexpected way, exposes the devices of the enemy, and raises up friends and protectors for his children. (Ver. 16-21; Ps. 7 : 14-16.)

16. We are in God's hands, by night as well as by day, among strangers and enemies, as well as among friends. (Ver. 22-24; Ps. 34 : 7.)

17. The Lord often uses human governments, as well as his angels and the elements of nature, in behalf of his servants. (Ver. 22-24; 2 Thess. 2 : 7.)

18. Though the wicked prefer the night for their deeds of darkness, it often affords the best time for acts of justice and mercy. (Ver. 23; 17 : 10.)

19. "How justly God brought the Jewish people under the Roman yoke, when such a part of the Roman army was necessary to restrain them from the most execrable villainies." (Ver. 23, 24.) (MATTHEW HENRY.)

20. The Christian carries with him a personal spiritual influence, and is an epistle read and known of all. A letter accompa-

nied Paul, the prisoner, but he himself was a living letter to Felix. (Ver. 25-30; 24 : 25; 2 Cor. 2 : 3.)

21. Questions of religious truth are little regarded by worldly men. (Ver. 29; John 18 : 38.)

22. Pagans have often been more lenient to the truth than bigoted and hypocritical professors of religion. (Ver. 30; John 19 : 12.)

23. Paul rides, accompanied with guards of soldiers, like a prisoner of state. The Lord provided and directed the journey. (Ver. 31-33.)

24. The Lord prepared a resting place for Paul at Cesarrea, with present work, and preparation for future missions. Here Luke found time for his researches. Had Paul not been a prisoner at Cesarrea, we might not have had Luke's Gospel and the Acts. (Ver. 31-35.)

Ch. 24 : In this chapter Luke narrates concerning Paul and Felix. We have Paul's third defense, and his mild treatment by the governor; and afterward, his reasoning concerning the Christian faith, which arouses the governor's conscience. During two years Felix often talks with him, with the hope of obtaining a bribe for his release, but failing in this, to gratify the Jews, he leaves Paul a prisoner at the close of his administration.

1-23. PAUL'S TRIAL BEFORE FELIX. TERTULLUS' ACCUSATION; PAUL'S DEFENSE; FELIX DEFERS THE MATTER. (Rom. 15 : 25, 26; 1 Cor. 16 : 3, 4; 2 Cor. 8 : 1-4; 9 : 1, 2.) About May 30, A. D. 58.

1. After five days—from Paul's departure from Jerusalem and arrival at Cesarrea, for both occurred on the same day; according to the Jewish mode of reckoning, the day beginning at sunset. (23 : 31-33.) The five days are probably to be taken Judaically, meaning the fifth day. (Matt. 27 : 63, 64.) Ananias, still feeling Paul's rebuke (23 : 3); the elders, or with the oldest manuscripts, certain or some elders, especially those of the sect of the Sad-

2 And when he was called forth, Tertullus began to accuse *him*, saying, "Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness, and that very worthy deeds are done
3 unto this nation by thy providence, we accept it always, and in all places, most
4 noble Felix, with all thankfulness. Not-

withstanding, that I be not further tedious unto thee, I pray thee that thou wouldest hear us of thy clemency a few
5 words. ¶ For we have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Naza-

• Ps. 12 : 2, 3; Prov. 26 : 28; 29 : 5. P ch. 6 : 13; 17 : 6; 21 : 28; Matt. 2 : 23; Luke 23 : 2.

ducees. The elders of the Pharisees would not likely go down. (23 : 9.) **A certain orator, Tertullus**—the name is a modification of the Latin Tertius. He was probably a Roman, and was an *orator* or *speaker*. He was doubtless chosen as an *advocate*, because of his knowledge of Roman law, and his ability to represent Paul as a dangerous and turbulent fellow. **Who**, referring to Tertullus and the whole deputation. **Informed the governor**—made known the charges against **Paul**. The verb is used in 25 : 2, 15, of laying formal information or complaint before a judge.

2. When he, Paul, was called, cited to appear by the crier of the court, according to Roman law, which gave an opportunity of a hearing and of self-defense. (25 : 16.) **Tertullus began to accuse him**. We have but the beginning and an abstract of his speech. Some suppose it was uttered in Latin, but not necessarily; for at that time trials were permitted in Greek. This and the next two verses are occupied with compliments to the judge. **Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness, or much peace**. There was some truth in this. By severe measures Felix had put down riots at Jerusalem and Caesarea, and waged war against false Messiahs and wandering bands that infested the country. "As to the number of robbers whom he caused to be crucified, and of those who were caught among them, and whom he brought to punishment, they were a multitude not to be enumerated." (JOSEPHUS, *Jewish War*, II. 13, 2.) Felix was to be praised for putting down sedition. **And that very worthy deeds, wholesome public measures, are done for this nation by thy providence**, through thy forethought, thy prudent administration. This was exaggeration. His severity bore evil fruit, and a selfish ambition showed itself.

Within two years of this he was accused by the Jews of bad government, and was recalled to Rome. (See on 24 : 27.)

3. **We accept, and acknowledge it always and everywhere . . . with all thankfulness**. This was gross flattery. He was denounced among the Jews for his cruelty and greed. (See on 23 : 24.)

4. **Notwithstanding . . . not further tedious—but that I may not hinder or detain thee longer** than proper, not so much by the preamble as by the few words about to be advanced. Tertullus would imply that Felix's public duties were onerous and his time precious: hence he must be brief. **Thy clemency**—thy condescending mildness or fairness, implying a reasonableness and a freedom from extremes. But Felix was far from being noted for the trait of character here applied to him, as well-known. Thus Tertullus, in following the rules of rhetoricians in making his introduction conciliatory, fell into gross flattery and exaggeration.

5. Tertullus now proceeds to make charges against Paul. They were three: sedition, heresy, and profanation of the temple. **We have found this man a pestilent fellow**—better, *a pest*, a mischievous, dangerous person. **A mover of sedition, or insurrections**. The plural is to be preferred. This first charge was the best suited to arouse the hostility of Felix. Death was the penalty of this crime. **Throughout the world**—that is, the Roman world. Jerusalem was full of strangers who had come to the feast. Very likely the Jews had gathered reports against Paul from his enemies in Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Greece, representing his seditious conduct. At Thessalonica he and his companions had been accused of turning the world upside down. (17 : 6, 7.)

A ringleader. The Greek word is a military term, meaning a front-rank

6 renes; ^a who also hath gone about to profane the temple: whom we took, and would ^b have judged according to our law.
 7 ^c But the chief captain Lysias came upon us, and with great violence took him
 8 away out of our hands, ^d commanding his

accusers to come unto thee: by examining of whom thyself mayest take knowledge of all these things, whereof we accuse him.

9 ^e And the Jews also assented, saying, That these things were so.

^a ch. 21 : 27-29.

^b John 18 : 31.

^c ch. 21 : 33.

^d ch. 23 : 30.

^e Isa. 59 : 4.

man in an army. **Of the sect.** In addition to his being an insurrectionist, he is charged with being a foremost leader of a dangerous and heretical religious organization. This to the Jewish mind was his greatest crime. **Of the Nazarenes**—a name of reproach which the Jews gave to Christians. (See John 1 : 46.) The name is still applied by Jews and Mohammedans. This is the only passage in the New Testament where it is applied to the followers of Jesus. They would not call his followers Christians, for the word Christ, meaning Messiah, was too sacred, and to give them such a name would be yielding too much to the claims of Jesus and his disciples.

7. Who also hath gone about, rather, who also attempted to profane the temple. Notice that the original charge, made amid popular excitement of profaning the temple (21 : 28) is modified to an attempt at profanation. This was against Roman as well as Jewish law, since the former protected Jews in the exercise of their worship, and engaged to keep the temple sacred. **Whom we took,** or arrested as a grave offender. Throughout, Tertullus speaks in the first person as the mouth-piece of the Jews.

The words that follow, including ver. 7 and the first clause of ver. 8, from **and would have judged to come unto thee** inclusive, are omitted in most of the oldest manuscripts and by the critical Greek Testaments, while the Greek text in those manuscripts where it is found exhibit various readings. If the words were originally in the text, we can see no reason why they were omitted. The address seems too brief without them; the pause in the thought at *whom we took*, seems too abrupt, and the words which are omitted are such as might be expected from an advocate who would make a most favorable showing for the Jews. While the external evidence is

against the passage, though conflicting, the internal evidence is for it. Alford has retained it in brackets as doubtful. So the Bible Union Version. The Revised Version puts it in the margin. Both the Syriac and Vulgate Versions have the passage.

7. But the chief captain Lysias . . . with great violence. This astute lawyer would represent the arrest of Paul by the Jews as legal, and the acts of the chief captain as violent and despotic. Perhaps his object was to obtain the surrender of Paul to the Jewish authorities for trial. His misstatements are obvious. The Jews were seeking to kill Paul, beating him, when Lysias took him without violence. (21 : 31-33.) Possibly such a perversion of facts by Tertullus may have led some early copyists to omit them.

8. By examining of whom. *Whom* in the Greek is in the singular number and refers to Lysias, if the supposed interpolation is retained. And this agrees well with ver. 22, "When Lysias the chief captain shall come down, I will fully inquire into your matters." Felix could thus learn from him what had really taken place. But if the passage be rejected, then the pronoun *whom* must refer to Paul. Of course, Felix would not condemn Paul without examining him. Perhaps Tertullus thought that Paul would evidently appear in the eyes of Felix to be a mover of seditions and a leader of a new religion. Yet it was strange for this lawyer to refer to the prisoner as the principal witness. It would indicate the weakness of his case. *Examining* has no reference to torture, which is not suggested by the context. As Roman citizens, both Lysias and Paul were exempt from it. It refers to a judicial investigation. (See 12 : 19 ; 28 : 18, where the same word is used, and compare 25 : 26.)

9. And the Jews—Ananias and the elders (ver. 1), who doubtless had in-

10 Then Paul, after that the governor had beckoned unto him to speak, answered, Forasmuch as I know that thou hast been of many years a judge unto this nation, I do the more cheerfully answer for myself:
11 because that thou mayest understand, that there are yet but twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem * for to worship.

12 † And they neither found me in the temple disputing with any man, neither raising up the people, neither in the synagogue, nor in the city: neither can they prove the things whereof they now accuse me. But this ‡ I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believ-

* ch. 21 : 26.

† ch. 25 : 8 ; 28 : 17.

‡ Ps. 119 : 46 ; Matt. 10 : 32.

strusted their advocate. Also as-sented—rather, *jointly set upon him*, unitedly assailed him, by formally and solemnly *alleging* that the charges were true.

10. Then Paul, after that the governor had beckoned, or *nodded to him*, answered. Paul's first defense had been before a vast crowd of Jews (ch. 22) ; his second before the Sanhedrin (23:1-9) ; this, the third, before the Roman governor in the presence of the leaders of the Sanhedrin. Paul here shows great frankness, manliness, and truthfulness, in contrast to the flatteries and perversions of Tertullus ; and meets each of the charges brought against him. (See on ver. 5.) He begins, like Tertullus, with a conciliatory introduction, ascribing to Felix an important qualification, that he **had been of many years a judge of this nation**, and therefore enjoyed abundant opportunity of knowing the Jews and the character of their leaders, and something too of Christians. It was now A. D. 58, and he had been six years procurator, which was longer than most of the governors served. Tacitus also states that he before had been governor of Samaria, when Cumanus was governor of Judea. **The more cheerfully**—or simply, *cheerfully*, according to the oldest manuscripts. He could make his defense with *good courage* before one who knew well Jewish manners and customs.

11. Paul meets the first charge of exciting sedition. This he denies, and demands the proof. **Because thou mayest understand**, etc. Better, *Since thou mayest ascertain that it is not more than twelve days*, etc. Felix could readily learn that he had been only six or seven days at Jerusalem, and what he had been doing in that short a time—too short indeed for stirring up seditions. So far from that,

the object of his visit was to worship, indicating a humble and reverent state of mind, entirely inconsistent with exciting seditions and profaning the temple. The twelve days may be reckoned thus: Commencing the evening of Paul's arrival at Jerusalem, first day, being Pentecost, he met with James (21:15-25) ; second day, he undertakes the Nazarite vow in the temple ; third to sixth day, continues the Nazarites' ceremonies and was arrested (21:27-33) ; seventh day, arraigned before the Sanhedrin ; eighth day, the Jewish conspiracy ; ninth day, beginning with the evening, Paul is taken by night to Antipatris and thence to Casarea by day ; tenth to twelfth day, confined in Herod's palace ; thirteenth day, appeared before Felix, after five days. (24:1.) This allows twelve full days since Paul's arrival at Jerusalem, which best accords with that accuracy which Paul would naturally use before a civil tribunal. (Compare *Harmonic Arrangement*, § 40.)

12. Paul emphatically denies the charge. The Jews had not **found** him even **disputing**, much less *causing a tumult of the people* either in the temple, or the synagogues, or in the streets of the city. They themselves had stirred up the crowd.

13. Neither could they *prove* their charges. They could make assertions (ver. 9), but they could give no formal evidence, such as the law required. This was Paul's right and their duty.

14. Paul proceeds to meet the second charge, that of heresy. (Ver. 5.) He frankly confesses that he belongs to what they call a sect, but declares that he believes all of the law and the prophets, holds to a resurrection, and constantly strives to lead a moral and religious life. **The way of worshiping God** (7:2) **which they call heresy**, rather, *a sect*, the same as that trans-

ing all things which are written in ^athe Law and in the Prophets: and ^bhave hope toward God, which they themselves also allow ^cthat there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and un-

just. And ^dherein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.

17 Now after many years ^eI came to bring

^a ch. 26: 22; 28: 23; John 1: 45. ^b ch. 23: 6; 26: 6, 7. ^c Job 19: 25, 26; Dan. 12: 2; John 5: 28, 29; Phil. 3: 21. ^d ch. 23: 1; 1 Tim. 3: 9; 1 Peter 3: 16. ^e ch. 11: 29, 30; Gal. 2: 10.

lated sect in ver. 5. The idea is that of a religious party with a shade of reproach. Tertullus had used the word in a bad sense. (ver. 4.) The term is applied to the Pharisees and Sadducees in 15: 5; 5: 17. **So worship or serve I the God of my fathers**, which Paul regards as in accordance with the highest development of the religion of Israel. As one of the sects of the Jews, Paul could claim the same toleration from the Romans for the Nazarenes as for the others. The *worship* is that of obligation. Paul had not cast off any of his allegiance to God. **Believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets.** He accepted and held to all the Jewish Scriptures; for so they are often termed. (Luke 16: 16; John 1: 45.)

15. Having hope . . . which they themselves also allow—namely, of a resurrection. This hope grew out of his belief in the law and the prophets. The resurrection was held by the Jewish nation as a whole, and especially by the Pharisees, the Sadducees who denied the doctrine being a comparatively small party. The words of the dead are wanting in the oldest manuscripts. **Of the just and unjust.** The resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked is clearly taught. (Dan. 12: 2; 2 Cor. 5: 10, 11.) In thus addressing Felix, Paul explains as intelligently as he possibly could to one who was not a Jew, the true relation of Christianity to the religion of Israel. So far from apostatizing from his religion, or from even being a sectarian, he worshiped the same God, believed the same Scriptures, and entertained the same hope of the future.

16. And, moreover, the aim and conduct of his life was conscientiously to do his duty, according to God's word, both to God and men. **Herein**—in this hope and in expectation of

that day—(ver. 15)—**do I exercise myself**—better, *do I also myself*, as well as they, *strive*. This verb was applied to athletic strife and training, and then to severe moral discipline. About five years later, Paul says, "I press toward the mark for the prize." (Phil. 3: 14.) **To have always a conscience void of offence**, etc.—a *blameless* or *unoffended conscience*, not troubled and distressed by a consciousness of sin. Compare similar words before Ananias, which these serve to explain. (23: 1.) The reference to the resurrection, and to his careful conscientious life in view of it, was fitted to touch the conscience of Felix. **Toward God and man.** Illustrated partly by what follows, *alms* to men and *offerings* to God. (ver. 17.) Such a man was not likely to be a profaner of the temple, or a mover of seditions.

17. Paul meets the third charge, that of profaning the temple. (ver. 6.) **After many, some years.** His last visit to Jerusalem was in A. D. 54 (18: 22); it was now A. D. 58. **To bring alms to my nation**—which Paul and his companions had collected in the churches of Macedonia and Achaia for the relief of believers at Jerusalem, which are often alluded to in his epistles. (Rom. 15: 25, 26; 1 Cor. 16: 1-4; 2 Cor. 8: 1-4; 9: 1, 2.) This is the only place in the Acts where these contributions are mentioned. In this incidental, undesignated and natural way, in which the Acts coincides with the epistles (written within the preceding year) and the epistles make up the deficiency of the Acts, we see, as Paley has shown, unmistakable evidences of the credibility of the writings of both Paul and Luke. **And offerings**—also, or even *offerings*. The noun, as Dr. Hackett remarks, depends loosely on the verb *to bring*. It seems to have been added almost as an after thought, of the sac-

18 alms to my nation, and offerings. ^f Whereupon certain Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple, neither with multitude, nor with tumult. ^g Who ought to have been here before thee, and object, 20 if they had aught against me. Or else let these same *here* say, if they have found any evil doing in me, while I stood before

21 the council, except it be for this one voice, that I cried standing among them, ^h Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day. 22 And when Felix heard these things, having more perfect knowledge of *that* way, he deferred them, and said, When Lysias the chief captain shall come down,

^f ch. 21 : 26-30; 26 : 21.

^g ch. 23 : 30; 25 : 16.

^h ch. 23 : 6; 28 : 20.

rifices he was making, or would have made in connection with the Nazarites. (21 : 26.) Alexander thus paraphrases it: "How could I come up to defile the temple and divide the people, when I brought relief to many poor among them; yes, and while there actually offered sacrifices at the very sanctuary which I am accused of trying to profane."

18. *Whereupon*—rather, *in which*, amid such business of aiding the poor and performing sacrifice. The oldest manuscripts have *which* in a gender which makes it refer more particularly to *offerings*: While engaged in these offerings *they found me purified in the temple*, according to the Nazarite vow. (21 : 26.) *Neither with multitude or crowd, nor with tumult*, peaceably, neither disturbing others, nor exciting riots. Just the opposite of what Tertullus had suggested. (Ver. 5.) All authorities place *certain Jews from Asia* in the latter clause of the verse, and the best manuscripts precede it by *But*, introducing an unfinished clause, which may be thus supplied, *But certain Jews from Asia* were there gathering the crowd and causing the tumult. Of these Asiatic Jews, perhaps from Ephesus (21 : 27), Paul seems about to speak further, but he refrains, simply adding that they ought to have been present (next verse).

19. *Who ought to have been here . . . and object*, rather, *and make accusation*. These Asiatic Jews had first raised the cry against him (21 : 27, 28), and very likely Tertullus had founded his argument on their information. They should have been there to say, *if they had aught against him*, for it was not the Roman custom to judge a prisoner unless his accusers were present. But they were now probably returning home,

though they were the only proper witnesses against him.

20. *Or else, let these themselves say*, etc. His accusers present could only speak of what passed before them, as he stood before the Sanhedrin. (23 : 1-10.) *If they found any evil doing in me*—rather, *what misdeed they found*. The oldest manuscripts omit *in me*. Up to that time the tumult had been caused by others. Of the division which he caused in the Sanhedrin he proceeds to speak.

21. *Except it be for this one voice*—this one exclamation. From 23 : 6 we learn that Paul raised his voice, when he spoke of the resurrection. *Touching the resurrection*, etc. (See on 23 : 6.) The quotation of his own words are as near like those recorded by Luke as might be expected. He omits *hope* before *resurrection*, and adds, *this day by*, or *before you*. *I am called in question*—or, *put on trial*, that I may be examined, and judgment passed upon me regarding it. This was the only thing that really came under the notice of the Sanhedrin. Paul thus frankly admits that he did cause strife in the Sanhedrin; but to this declaration of his faith they could not reasonably object, and he evidently supposes that Felix knew how the people were divided on the doctrine of the resurrection, and that the Sadducees present would be opposed to Paul on that account. It is to be noted that he makes no reference to his rebuke of the high priest. (23 : 3.) As a prediction of God's judgment, he need not refer to it.

22. Paul's defense, though without witnesses, had its effect on Felix. *And when Felix*, etc.—according to the oldest and best manuscripts, *And Felix put them off, having more accurate knowledge concerning*

I will know the uttermost of your matter.
 23 And he commanded a centurion to keep Paul, and to let *him* have liberty, and

ⁱ that he should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister or come unto him.
 24 And after certain days, when Felix

¹ ch. 27 : 3 ; 28 : 16.

the Way, the Christian religion. Felix obtained a clearer view from Paul's defense as to the relation of Christianity to Judaism. He saw that the Jews had no case against Paul ; that he had committed no offence against the Roman government. Yet Felix, like Pilate before him, wished to conciliate the Jews. He was not bound to fix a set time for the trial, and could hold the prisoner indefinitely. **When Lysias . . . shall come down.** Doubtless he came often down to Cesarea, the residence of the governor ; yet this, on the part of Felix, was evidently a courteous, but meaningless excuse. This verse gives support to the genuineness of ver. 7 (on which see), in which case he adopts the suggestion of Tertullus. **I will know the uttermost of your matter**—*I will fully know* by inquiry, and so *determine your matter*.

23. The kind treatment and the liberty given Paul show further the good impression made by his defense on Felix. **He commanded a**, rather, *the centurion*—the one present, and who had conducted Paul into the presence of Felix, **to keep Paul**, rather, *that he should be guarded and have liberty, or indulgence*. The idea is that he should be kept safely, but not closely and severely imprisoned. There were three kinds of custody among the Romans : 1. In the common jail, of which the imprisonment of Paul and Silas at Philippi is an instance. 2. Military custody, in which the prisoner was in charge of soldiers, often chained to one. 3. Free custody, in which the accused was released on bail, or entrusted to the charge of a magistrate, who became responsible for his appearance on the day of the trial. It was to the military custody that Paul was now committed, but with an indulgence or the relaxing of prison rules. **And forbid none of his acquaintance, or friends, to minister, or wait on him**, supplying any needed want, and communicating with the outer world.

Among the friends were doubtless Philip the Evangelist, and other believers at Cesarea (21:8), Trophimus (21:29), Aristarchus (27:2), and Luke, the author of this narrative. (21:15; 27:1.) **Or come**—omitted by the highest critical authorities. Perhaps Felix may have hoped that through these friends money would be given him for Paul's release. (Ver. 26.)

24-27. PAUL BEFORE FELIX AND DRUSILLA. IMPRISONMENT FOR TWO YEARS AT CESAREA. A. D. 58-60.

24. Not long after the trial, **after certain days**, probably some time in the month of June, A. D. 58, **Felix**, having been away for a time, **came back with his wife Drusilla**, etc. She was the daughter of Agrippa I. (12:1), and sister of Agrippa II., and of Bernice (25:23), being a **Jewess** by birth and profession, though not a very strict one. Josephus says that Agrippa "gave his sister Drusilla in marriage to Azizus, king of Emesa, upon his consent to be circumcised. . . . But not long after, the marriage of Drusilla and Azizus was dissolved as follows. While Felix was procurator of Judea, he saw Drusilla and fell in love with her, for she did exceed all other women in beauty, and he sent to her one of his friends, a Jew of Cyprus, a magician, to persuade her to forsake her present husband and marry him. . . . Accordingly she acted ill, and being desirous of avoiding her sister's envy, who ill-treated her on account of her beauty, she was induced to transgress the laws of her forefathers and marry Felix ; and when he had a son by her, he named him Agrippa." (*Antiq.* XX, 7, 1, 2.) Both mother and son perished at an eruption of Mount Vesuvius, A. D. 79. According to Tacitus it appears that Felix also had been previously married. Suetonius says that Felix was the husband of three queens, probably meaning three wives of royal lineage. **He sent for Paul**. For two reasons probably : 1. The new knowledge obtained concerning the

came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him 25 concerning the faith in Christ. And as he reasoned of ^k righteousness, ^l temperance, and ^m judgment to come, ⁿ Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for

this time; ^o when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee. He hoped also that ^p money should have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him: wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him.

^k 2 Sam. 23 : 3; Ps. 82 : 1-4; Prov. 16 : 12. 16, 17. ^m Eccl. 3 : 17; 12 : 14; 2 Cor. 5 : 10. 24-32; 27 : 1; Eccl. 9 : 10; Luke 17 : 26-29; Heb. 3 : 7, 13.

^l Exod. 20 : 14; Prov. 31 : 3-5; Eccl. 10 : 2. ⁿ Jer. 23 : 29; Heb. 4 : 12. ^o Prov. 1 : 2. ^p Exod. 23 : 8; Prov. 19 : 6.

Christian Way at the trial excited a wish to know more. His conscience, too, may have been touched by the reference to the resurrection of the just and unjust. 2. Drusilla, in her girlhood, fourteen years before, doubtless heard of the death of James, the brother of John, and the delivery of Peter from prison, and may have connected the tragic end of her father in some way with his persecuting Christians. This, with what she had heard of Paul and of Christians, may have made her desirous of hearing him concerning the faith in Christ Jesus.

25. Felix and Drusilla wished to hear about Christ Jesus and the new religion; but Paul with boldness and fidelity made religion a personal matter, and adapted his discourse to his hearers, by presenting the truth suited to their case. Hence he reasoned, or discoursed of righteousness, rectitude of conduct and character, right feeling, thinking, and acting according to the law of God. The faith in Christ required holiness, purity of heart and life (Rom. 6 : 12, 13, 19, 22), and so Paul discoursed not only upon righteousness in general, but also upon temperance, or self-control. He enforces the duty of mastering one's desires and passions, especially his sensual appetites. Both righteousness and self-control had been grossly outraged by Felix and Drusilla. Tacitus speaks of Felix as reckless and licentious, and acting with a tyranny and cruelty, as though he had license to commit every crime with impunity. (Ann. xii. 54, Hist. v. 9.) And judgment to come—which all, including his hearers, must face, and Christ Jesus himself would be judge. (Rom. 2 : 16.) Without special personal application, Paul presented the truths of the gospel, which commend them-

selves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. (2 Cor. 4 : 2.) Felix trembled—a strong expression; he was alarmed, filled with fear and forebodings, and abruptly closed the interview. Answered, to this unexpected and terrible discourse, and to what he felt to be his duty: Go thy way—depart for this time. "Fear sent away not the sin, but the preacher." (ABBOTT.) When I have a convenient season I will call for thee. His opportunity for learning and attending to this matter frequently came afterward, for he often communed with Paul (ver. 26); but never afterward does he appear to have been thus convicted, and never did there come a time, so far as we know, which seemed to him opportune for attending to these matters. (See Mark 6 : 26.) Notice that nothing is said of Drusilla.

26. He hoped also that money should have been given him of Paul—better, At the same time when giving this answer, he hoped, etc. Such bribery had become so common among Roman officials, that a law was enacted, forbidding a judge to receive bribes in any form for arresting, acquitting, or condemning any one. But he knew that Paul had many friends at Cesarea, that he brought money to the poor at Jerusalem (ver. 17), and he hoped to get pay for doing justice to his prisoner. Wherefore he sent for him the oftener and communed with him, held friendly intercourse, not because he wished to know more of the gospel, but from a mercenary motive. This would seem, according to Tacitus, to have been characteristic of Felix. While Cumanus governed Galilee Felix ruled Samaria; and these two wily and base procurators encouraged the enmity and passions between the Jews and Samaritans, and thus enriched themselves by booty, as if it had been

27 But after two years Porcius Festus came into Felix' room: and Felix, willing

ing to show the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound.

4 ch. 12 : 3 ; 25 : 9, 11 ; Mark 15 : 15.

the spoils of war. (See on *Felix*, 23 : 24.) Felix hardens his heart; and his hope of gain is so great that he is willing to hear the unpleasant exhortations of Paul, if he can only secure money for Paul's release. Doubtless Felix suggested it indirectly to Paul and to his friends. But while Felix neglected the great opportunity to do right, Paul found no time when he could do wrong.

27. But after two years, or two years having been fulfilled, or completed, showing that Luke is not reckoning according to the Jewish method of counting a part of a year for the whole, but that he means two full years. **Porcius Festus came into Felix' room.** Felix was recalled to Rome, and was followed by charges of cruelty and injustice by the Jews at Cæsarea before Nero, and would have been punished had it not been for his brother Pallas. Regarding his after life we know nothing. Festus was sent as governor, probably in the summer of A. D. 60. For the chronological discussion of this date, see *Harmonic Arrangement of the Acts*, on § 50. Further on Festus, see on 25 : 1. **And Felix willing to shew the Jews a pleasure**—more exactly, *And desiring to lay up favors for himself with the Jews*, that is, wishing to win their favor. **Left Paul bound**—his favors to them would naturally bring him favors in return. And especially he hoped to soften the anger of Jews and lessen their charges against him at Rome, and place them under some obligation to him. But in this he failed; for immediately upon his recall, the Jews of Cæsarea sent complaints against him. **Bound**—in military custody (ver. 23), and very probably in chains, for such is a common meaning of the word, thus giving his successor the impression that he was deserving punishment.

It would be interesting to know what Paul did during these two years. But God has wisely cast a veil over them. After twenty years of active labor,

attended with persecutions, sufferings, and hardships, Paul is providentially given leisure for reflection and rest. His spiritual growth, during the years of his imprisonment at Cæsarea and Rome, is seen in the profounder views of his later Epistles. While at Cæsarea he doubtless taught and counseled the friends who came to him, and directed those helpers who were with him. Luke probably prepared his Gospel at that time under his direction, and gathered materials for the Acts. We may well suppose that Paul also had some communication with many of the churches he had gathered in Asia Minor and Greece. Doubtless brethren from some of these churches called on him, who had come to Judea, during these two years, and bore back oral or brief written messages to the churches. While Paul was comparatively quiet, we cannot suppose that he was inactive, or that he failed to do good as he had opportunity. (Gal. 6 : 10.)

PRACTICAL REMARKS.

1. "No cause is so bad that it cannot find an advocate." (STARKE.) (Ver. 1; 13 : 8, 9.)
2. "Eloquence is the gift of God, but the eloquence of a bad man is like poison in a golden cup." (Ver. 2; Exod. 4 : 11; Rom. 3 : 13; James 3 : 5-10.)
3. Flattery is deceitful and is used for selfish ends. The good do not need it; the bad are better without it. (Ver. 2-4; Prov. 26 : 28; 1 Thess. 2 : 5.)
4. Artfulness and cunning especially characterize wicked and worldly men. (Ver. 4; Jer. 5 : 27.)
5. The character and services of God's servants are distorted by the world. (Ver. 5, 6; 2 Cor. 6 : 8.)
6. Contemptuous words too often take the place of argument, and indicate a weak cause. (Ver. 5-8; 1 Sam. 20 : 30-33.)
7. It is easy to find those who will consent to and confirm a lie. (Ver. 9; Jer. 9 : 3-6.)
8. Conciliatory language and complimentary words, if true, often reach the

Paul's trial before Festus; his appeal to Cæsar.

25 NOW when Festus was come into the

province, after three days he ascended
2 from Cæsarea to Jerusalem. [†]Then the
high priest and the chief of the Je^s,

[†] ch. 24 : 1.

heart when mere argument might fail. (Ver. 10; 26 : 2, 3, 24-26.)

9. A simple statement of facts is often the best offset to falsehood. (Ver. 11-15; Prov. 12 : 17-19.)

10. Let our lives and deeds be such as can, at all times, challenge investigation. (Ver. 13; John 8 : 46.)

11. Let us ever be ready to confess Christ both before friends and foes. (Ver. 14; 1 Tim. 6 : 13, 14; 1 Peter 3 : 15.)

12. Christianity is not a sect of Judaism or of any other religion, but the Way of true worship, the end and fulfiller of the law, involving all the great eternal truths of the Old Dispensation. (Ver. 14, 15; 2 Tim. 1 : 3; Rom. 3 : 31; 10 : 4.)

13. The doctrine of the resurrection is fundamental in revealed religion, brought clearly to view in the gospel. (Ver. 15, 21; Isa. 26 : 19; Dan. 12 : 2; 2 Tim. 1 : 10.)

14. If we would have a conscience void of offense toward God and man, we must, like Paul, make it our earnest effort and aim. (Ver. 16; Phil. 3 : 13, 14.)

15. True religion takes hold of the conscience, and a truly enlightened conscience exercises itself in regard to the whole circle of moral duty. (Ver. 16; 1 Tim. 1 : 5, 19.)

16. Paul gives us an example in his defence of simplicity and courage. (Ver. 17, 19.)

17. The best of motives may be misunderstood, and deeds of mercy are often misrepresented. (Ver. 17-19.)

18. Instigators of trouble are often wanting when their presence is needed. (Ver. 19.)

19. We should strive to live so that our most vulnerable points can be safely exposed to the keenest scrutiny. (Ver. 20, 21; 1 Thess. 2 : 10; 2 Cor. 6 : 3-10.)

20. Felix, to a certain extent a second Pilate, acted worse than his knowledge. (Ver. 22, 26, 27.)

21. A presentation of the gospel not only enlightens, but produces conviction. (Ver. 22, 25; 2 Cor. 4 : 2.)

22. It is impossible to treat Christ and his servants impartially, while trying to please the world. (Ver. 23; Matt. 12 : 30.)

23. Whatever the object of hearers in listening to the gospel, the object of the preacher should be to save them. (Ver. 24, 25.)

24. The preacher should discuss topics appropriate to his hearers. (Ver. 25; Col. 2 : 28.)

25. The gospel, faithfully proclaimed, will make its own application to the hearts of men. (Ver. 25; 1 Cor. 2 : 3, 4.)

26. The present moment is convenient to him who wishes to repent, but no moment to him who wishes to delay. (Ver. 25.)

27. If conviction of sin lead not to repentance, it tends to harden the heart. (Ver. 27; 2 Cor. 2 : 16.)

28. Mercenary motives for attending upon the means of grace will prevent the receiving of all spiritual profit. (Ver. 27; 8 : 20-22.)

29. One sin prepares the way for another. Trying to please the world puts one into the power of the world. (Ver. 27; 2 Peter 2 : 15.)

Ch. 25: This chapter and the next give an account of Paul under Festus. The Jews lay a fresh plot against Paul's life; and after a second trial at Cæsarea, would have induced Festus to send him to Jerusalem, intending to kill him on the way, had he not appealed to Cæsar. But as Festus had no definite charge against Paul to lay before the emperor, he seeks the aid of King Agrippa, who is present, on a visit, before whom Paul is summoned for examination.

1-12. PAUL'S TRIAL AND DEFENCE BEFORE FESTUS. HIS APPEAL TO CÆSAR. (See ver. 14-21.) A. D. 60.

1. Festus exhibits frankness and honesty in contrast to Felix. Josephus does not speak of him with any disapprobation. He found Judea in a very troubled state, and although he made strenuous efforts to restore order, and with some apparent success, the Zealots and others so retained their hold upon the masses that when Festus died, in the summer of A. D. 62, disorder and

informed him against Paul, and besought
 3 him, and desired favour against him, that
 he would send for him to Jerusalem, *lay-
 4 ing wait in the way to kill him. But Festus
 answered, that Paul should be kept at
 Caesarea, and that he himself would de-
 5 part shortly *thither*. Let them therefore,
 said he, which among you are able, go

down with *me*, and accuse this man, if
 there be any wickedness in him.

6 And when he had tarried among them
 more then ten days, he went down unto
 Caesarea; and the next day sitting on the
 judgment seat commanded Paul to be
 7 brought. And when he was come, the
 Jews which came down from Jerusalem

* ch. 23 : 12-15.

confusion prevailed more than ever
 before. He was succeeded by Abanús.
 (Josephus, *Antiq.* XX, 8, 10, 11.)

When Festus was come into the
 province—into Judea, which was a
 province of a second rank, or append-
 age to the Roman province of Syria.
 He came to *Caesarea*, the military head-
 quarters of the Roman governor. (See
 on 8 : 40.) After three days—the third
 day after his arrival, taking a day or
 two for rest at Caesarea. He thus showed
 great promptness and a mind for busi-
 ness.

2. Then the high priest—ac-
 cording to the best manuscripts, *And*
the chief priests, perhaps including
 Ananias, who had been succeeded by
 Ismael as high priest. (See on 4 : 23.)
The chief, or first of the Jews.
 The Sadducees were the leading men
 of wealth. **Informed him**—laid
 charges against Paul. (See on 24 : 1.)
 Two years had not cooled their hatred.

3. **Desired favor for themselves**
against him. The special favor here
 meant is that he would **send for**
him to come to Jerusalem. From
 ver. 15, 16 it appears that they also re-
 quested that Paul might at once be
 condemned, which was denied by Festus.
 Doubtless as leading men of the
 nation they hoped to influence the new
 governor. Paul was but one private
 individual; they were many. It would
 be far more convenient for him to come
 up to Jerusalem than for them to go
 down to Caesarea. **Laying wait**, al-
 ready *laying a plot*. They seem to have
 thought that the new governor, wish-
 ing to ingratiate himself, would grant
 the favor, and had already laid their
 plans. Very likely some of those forty
 men who had previously bound them-
 selves with a vow (23 : 12) were now ar-
 ranging an ambush. Josephus informs
 us that the land was full of assassins,

who were hired by various parties for
 such purposes.

4. **But Festus answered them**
 wisely and firmly, showing that he
 wished justice done. **That Paul**
should be kept—rather, *was kept*,
 safely guarded at Caesarea. The
 answer is a refusal, but in conciliatory
 language. **That he himself should**
soon go thither. Paul's removal to Je-
 rusalem was therefore unnecessary, and
 also inconvenient, as Festus, being a
 new governor, must move on actively,
 and quickly return to Caesarea.

5. **Let them therefore . . .**
which among you are able, etc.
Let therefore the powerful, or influen-
tial among you go down with me.
 Festus does not refer to their ability to
 go down, but to the characters of the
 persons, as proper representatives of
 the Jewish leaders, men of rank
 and wealth. He assumes that Felix
 had good reasons for keeping Paul in
 custody at Caesarea, and he will not
 change the arrangement. **If there**
be any wickedness—literally, *any-*
thing out of place, or amiss, in him.
 (Luke 23 : 41.) There must be a fair trial,
 and that could be held without delay
 just as well at Caesarea as at Jerusalem.

6. **When he had tarried . . .**
more then ten days—rather, ac-
 cording to the most approved manu-
 scripts, *not more than eight, or ten*
days, showing that he dispatched his
 business without delay. The Jewish
 leaders also appear to have accepted
 the governor's proposition, to go down
 with him, for the next day after his
 arrival at Caesarea, *he sat on the judg-*
ment seat, and commanded Paul
to be brought. (See John 19 : 13.) Thus
 Festus continues to show himself
 prompt and active, and a man of his
 word.

7. **Then, the Jews which had**

stood round about, and laid many and grievous complaints against Paul, which they could not prove. While he answered for himself, "Neither against the law of the Jews, neither against the temple, nor yet against Cæsar, have I offended anything at all.

9 But Festus, willing to do the Jews a pleasure, answered Paul, and said, Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things before me? Then said Paul, I stand at Cæsar's judgment seat, where I ought to be judged: to the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou very

† ch. 24 : 5, 13; Mark 15 : 3; Luke 23 : 2, 10. † ch. 24 : 12; 28 : 17; Jer. 37 : 18. * ch. 24 : 27.

come down from Jerusalem stood round about him. A life-like picture, and suggestive of the eagerness with which they compassed on every side their long-lost victim. **And laid many and grievous complaints, or charges.** What these were may be inferred from the former accusations before Felix (24 : 5, 6), and Paul's reply in the next verse. **Which they could not prove**—consisting of rumors, reports and their own declarations. As in the former trial, they were without witnesses, and without evidence.

8. Paul answered for himself—or said in defence, doubtless very much as in his trial before Felix. (24 : 10-21.) A mere summary is here given. The three charges of the former trial are referred to, modified, or strengthened by certain new phases of the case. Thus during the two years the Jews may have learned more definitely regarding Paul's teaching concerning circumcision, as not essential to Christianity (Gal. 6 : 15), and they may have made more definite charges of offences against the law of the Jews. So also they doubtless laid greater stress on his offences against Cæsar, equivalent to emperor, representing the Roman power. (See on 17 : 7.) If they could make him out a political offender they felt sure of the condemnation of Festus.

9. But Festus willing to do the Jews a pleasure, rather, wishing to gain favor with the Jews. Compare almost the same phrase in 24 : 27. It was natural for the new governor to desire in all proper ways to ingratiate himself among his subjects, and be popular with the leading men of his province. He had not consented to their request to have the trial at Jerusalem (ver. 3), but he now throws the responsibility of deciding on Paul himself. **Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem and be judged?** That is, by the

Sanhedrin, but in his presence, before me, he having the power to confirm or veto the sentence. By this proposal, Festus virtually acquits Paul of any offences against the Roman government, or against Roman law. (Ver. 18.) In regard to the charges against the Jewish law Festus felt himself incompetent to judge. (Ver. 19, 20.) Doubtless he had something of Gallio's feeling. (18 : 15.) But he had no right to transfer Paul from the Roman to the Jewish court without his consent. (Ver. 10, 11.) And so very likely Festus anticipated what Paul's reply would be. By his question Festus appears to wish to do no injustice to Paul, but at the same time avoid giving offence to the Jews, and so far as possible under the circumstances to gain their favor.

10. Paul's answer is prompt and decisive, as one who understood the law and his own rights, and the purposes of the Jews against him. He saw that his only safety was in frustrating their designs. **I stand at Cæsar's judgment seat**—at the tribunal of the emperor. Syria, of which Judea was a sub-division, was an imperial Roman province, under the direct rule of the emperor. Festus was the representative of Cæsar. Paul had for two years been under Roman imperial authority, and he refuses to change to another tribunal. Both on this account and as a Roman citizen he could say, **where I ought to be judged**—as a matter of right. How much more so when he could confidently assert, **To the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou very well knowest**, literally, *as thou also knowest better*, that is, better than by thy question thou seemest to know, or better than thou art willing to appear to know. How carefully and wisely does Paul put this. The Jews, under these circumstances, could have no judicial claim on him; and before

11 well knowest. ^y For if I be an offender, or have committed anything worthy of death, ^z I refuse not to die; but if there be none of these things whereof these accuse me, no man may deliver me unto them. ^a I appeal unto Cæsar.

12 Then Festus, when he had conferred

with the council, answered, Hast thou appealed unto Cæsar? Unto Cæsar shalt thou go.

Festus confers with King Agrippa; Paul brought before them.

13 AND after certain days king Agrippa

^y ch. 23 : 29 ; 26 : 31.

^z Prov. 28 : 1.

^a ch. 26 : 32 ; 28 : 19.

the Jewish tribunal his accusers would largely be his judges.

11. For should be omitted according to the highest critical authorities. If I be an offender, or have committed any thing worthy of death, according to Roman law, **I refuse not to die.** I am under the jurisdiction of Rome, and I do not ask for exemption from punishment, if I deserve it. **But if there be none of these things whereof these accuse me,** if their charges are groundless, as evidently they are, **no man can deliver me unto them.** "Modestly said; that is, thou canst not." (BENGEL.) More fully expressed: *No one can give me up as a favor to them for condemnation and punishment.* Paul claims his rights and the protection of law. **I appeal unto Cæsar.** This was a right of a Roman citizen. A hearing before the emperor was the final tribunal, and was regarded as a safeguard against any prejudice and tyranny of the provincial magistrates. Pliny wrote some years later to Trajan, that he would send to Rome those Bithynian Christians who possessed the right of Roman citizens. Various motives probably influenced Paul to appeal to Cæsar. (1) He saw no prospect of speedy justice, and desired to avoid any possibility of being delivered to the Jews. (28:19.) (2) To relieve Festus of any unpleasant dilemma in his case. (3) His desire to go to Rome (19:21); and perhaps he began to see how the Lord would fulfill his promise, that he must bear witness at Rome. (23:11.)

12. When he had conferred with the council—the advisers who sat with him. Governors and procurators of provinces had a board of assessors or advisers, with whom they consulted before rendering judgment. (*Thayer's N. T. Greek Lex.*) Sueton-

nus and Josephus both speak of such officials. (*See Jewish War*, II. 16, 1.)

Hast thou appealed unto Cæsar? This is not a question, but a formal and solemn declaration. **Unto Cæsar shalt thou go**—your appeal is granted and shall be carried out. Nero was emperor at this time. Thus Festus and his advisers concluded that there was nothing in the way of granting the appeal at once. "Some offences were held to be so enormous as to exclude the exercise of this right, and when the crime was not of this character, the evidence of guilt might be so palpable as to demand an immediate and final decision." (HACKETT.) The Julian law, however, forbade any unnecessary impediment being put in the way of any who had thus appealed.

13-27. FESTUS CONFERS WITH AGRIPPA CONCERNING PAUL. PAUL BROUGHT BEFORE AGRIPPA. The summer of A. D. 60.

13. After certain days—probably a week or two. Agrippa would not delay long before coming to **salute Festus**, offering him his congratulations and welcome. **King Agrippa and Bernice.** This was Herod Agrippa II., the son of Herod Agrippa I., whose terrible death is related in ch. 12, and great grandson of Herod the Great. He was brother of Bernice and Drusilla. At his father's death he was but seventeen years old, and on account of his youth he was not appointed to succeed him, whose kingdom included all that of Herod the Great. Some time after the Emperor Claudius gave Agrippa the kingdom of Chaleis, the presidency of the temple at Jerusalem and its treasures, and the power to appoint the high priest; and in A. D. 53, he added the former tetrarchy of Philip and Lysanias (*Luke 3:1*) with the title of king. Nero afterward added the city of Tiberias and a part of Galilee

and Bernice came unto Cæsarea to salute
 14 Festus. And when they had been there
 many days, Festus declared Paul's cause
 unto the king, saying, ^bThere is a certain
 15 man left in bonds by Felix, ^cabout whom,
 when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests
 and the elders of the Jews informed me,
 desiring to have judgment against him.
 16 ^dTo whom I answered, It is not the

manner of the Romans to deliver any
 man to die, before that he which is
 accused have the accusers face to face
 and have license to answer for himself
 concerning the crime laid against him,
 17 Therefore, when they were come hither,
^ewithout any delay on the morrow I sat
 on the judgment seat, and commanded

^b ch. 24 : 27.^c ver. 2, 3.^d ver. 4, 5; John 7 : 51.^e ver. 6.

to his dominion. Agrippa displeased the Jews by building a room in his palace at Jerusalem so as to overlook the temple, by lavishing favors upon the city of Berytus, and by his capricious changes in the high priesthood. In the war against Jerusalem he sided with the Romans. He died about A. D. 100, at Rome, aged about seventy, and was the last prince of the house of the Herods. Bernice was beautiful, but dissolute; married early to her uncle Herod, king of Chalcis, and early left a widow, was now living with her brother, Agrippa, in unlawful intimacy. To escape the scandal she afterward married Polemon, king of Cilicia, but soon deserted him to return to her brother at Rome. She afterward became mistress of Vespasian and of his son Titus. The references to her in the Acts are true to her history. "We mark not only the pomp and parade with which she and Agrippa came with Festus into the audience chamber to hear the prisoner Paul, but also the fact that when this brilliant company swept out of the chamber, Bernice is again named, as though she was the most noteworthy of all those present. If from this we look into contemporary history, it is startling to observe how she appears there. It was an age of profligate women; and among such the Herodian Bernice was notorious through the empire. . . . We find this passage of the Acts in harmony with what we learn from historians and satirists, even to the jewelry which Agrippa gave to this shameless woman." (DR. HOWSON, *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 148.)

14. And when, etc.—*while they were spending several days, perhaps a week. Festus declared Paul's cause to the king. He laid the case before him in a conversational way. It was quite natural that the new gov-*

ernor, being a Gentile, should seek light from King Agrippa on matters concerning which the latter would be familiar, since he was a Jew by birth.

15. The chief priests (ver. 2) . . . informed me, *made complaint against Paul, as in ver. 2. Desiring judgment*—rather, *sentence against him*, according to the oldest manuscripts. This request is different from that in ver. 3, that Paul might be brought to Jerusalem. The former evidently preceded the latter. After Festus had courteously refused their first request (next verse), then they make the second request, not because they hoped for the condemnation of Paul from such a trial, but because they would have opportunity to waylay and kill him. The two proposals, as Dr. Hackett suggests, could have been made at different times.

16. Festus courteously refuses their request. It was contrary to Roman custom; it would be unlawful and not right for him to do it. His reply illustrates the love of justice by virtuous Romans. The manner, or custom, among the Romans, in such matters. To deliver any man to die. Omit, *to die*. Simply *To give up any man*, as a gift or favor. Paul uses the same expression in ver. 11. Reference seems to be had to the Jews' request for a favor. (Ver. 3.) It indicates a degeneracy of the Jewish conscience. They thought their influence would be sufficient to corrupt Festus. Have license—*have opportunity to make his defense*. This answer, and the whole conversation are in perfect accord with what we know of Roman usages and law.

17. When they were come hither—or *were come together here*, at Cæsarea, according to his order. (Ver. 5.) Without any delay—the promptness mani-

18 the man to be brought forth. Against whom, when the accusers stood up, they brought none accusation of such things as I supposed: ^f but had certain questions against him of their own superstition, and of one Jesus, which was dead, whom 20 Paul affirmed to be alive. And because I doubted of such manner of questions, I asked *him* whether he would go to Jeru-

salem, and there be judged of these 21 matters. But when Paul had appealed to be reserved unto the hearing of ^g Augustus, I commanded him to be kept till I might send him to Caesar. 22 Then ^h Agrippa said unto Festus, I would also hear the man myself. To-morrow, said he, thou shalt hear him. 23 And on the morrow, when Agrippa was

^f ch. 18 : 15 ; 23 : 29.

^g Luke 2 : 1.

^h ch. 9 : 15.

festus in ver. 4 ; a contrast too with the procrastinating course of Felix.

18. Against whom. The Revised Version translates *Concerning whom*. Better, *Standing up around him*. So Bible Union Version, Hackett, Meyer, Winer, etc. A vivid description of Paul's accusers gathering around him at his trial. (Ver. 7.) **Of such things,** transgressions of the law. **As I supposed, suspected.** Compare Gallio's speech. (18 : 14.) Festus' ideas had been confused, but from the representations of the Jews he had supposed Paul a notable criminal against Caesar and Roman authority. (Ver. 8.)

19. Instead of crimes Festus found that the Jews **had certain questions against him, or certain controversies with him concerning their own superstition.** The word translated *superstition* is a kindred word to that used by Paul in addressing the Athenians. (17 : 22.) It may be used in a bad sense of *superstition* or *demon-worship*, or in a good sense of *divinity-worship*, or religion. Festus knew that Agrippa was a Jew, and he would not have spoken offensively of his faith. But at the same time he himself was a Gentile and accustomed to the worship of deified dead men among the Greeks and Romans, and he may have associated Jesus with such. He would naturally use the word in a good though somewhat middle sense, *their own divinity worship*. He could thus speak generally without any offence to Agrippa. **And of one, or a certain, Jesus.** Thus he speaks indifferently of Jesus, and of his resurrection, as only Paul's assertion.

20. And because I doubted of such manner of questions—being perplexed in regard to the inquiry about these things, about Jesus, his resurrection, and his religion. Doubtless this

was a reason which would commend itself to Agrippa, and gain his sympathy and help ; but the principal reason is given in ver. 9, the desire of Festus to please and gain favor with the Jews.

21. When Paul had appealed to be reserved. He preferred to be kept under Roman authority to going up to Jerusalem to be tried. This was contrary to Festus' suggestion, and doubtless seemed strange to him. **Unto the hearing—of Augustus, for the decision,** the discriminating opinion or judgment of the emperor, implying a thorough examination. **Augustus,** meaning *venerable, revered*, a title of honor given by the Roman Senate and people to the first Emperor Octavian, and afterward conferred on his successors, and became the usual designation of the emperor. The present Augustus was Nero. **Till I might send,** etc.—till he had an opportunity of sending him to Italy by a sailing vessel. (27 : 1.)

22. Then Agrippa said, I would also hear the man. Literally, *I was wishing also myself, if it were proper and thou wouldst permit it, to hear this man*. Agrippa had often heard of Paul, his fame and eloquence, and doubtless from curiosity had desired before this to see and hear him. The expression here refers to a wish still existing: While Festus was speaking, up to the very moment of his utterance, Agrippa *was wishing*. It was a courteous way of expressing his desire to hear Paul, and help Festus in regard to this troublesome case. (Ver. 26.)

23. Agrippa and Bernice are again mentioned as well-known, and without any reference to her relation to him. The scandal regarding them, and the fact that both were living with great influence, when this was written, doubtless accounts for the omission. **With great pomp and display—true to their**

come, and Bernice, with great pomp, and was entered into the place of hearing, with the chief captains, and principal men of the city at Festus' commandment Paul was brought forth.

- 24 And Festus said, King Agrippa, and all men which are here present with us, ye see this man, about whom all the multitude of the Jews have dealt with me, both at Jerusalem, and also here, crying

that he ought not to live any longer. 25 But when I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death,¹ and that he himself hath appealed to Augustus, I have determined to send him. Of whom I have no certain thing to write unto my lord. Wherefore I have brought him forth before you, and specially before thee, O king Agrippa, that after exami-

¹ ch. 21 : 36 ; 22 : 22.

* ch. 26 : 31 ; 28 : 18.

¹ ver. 11, 12.

history and that of their family. Sixteen years before, their father sat on his throne in royal apparel in this same city of Cæsarea. (12 : 21.) (See on ver. 13 of this chapter.) **The place of hearing**—the *auditorium*, or audience-room, which seems to have been connected with the governor's palace, whether as a lecture room, or for the trying of cases is not certain. **Chief captains**—the commanders of a thousand men, that is, of Roman cohorts. (See on 21 : 31.) According to Josephus five of these cohorts were stationed at Cæsarea, the political capital of the province. **Principal men**—prominent or leading men of the city. **Paul was brought forth**—a fulfillment of our Lord's prediction (Matt. 10 : 18), "Before governors also and kings will ye be brought for my sake, for a testimony to them and to the Gentiles."

24. Festus explains the reason and design of this gathering. This verse states the popular feelings of the Jews, **all the multitude**, etc. (21 : 27.) **Have dealt with me**—*besought or petitioned me* against him. **And here**—at Cæsarea, referring especially to the deputation from Jerusalem. (Ver. 7.) Very probably also the latter had aroused the prejudices of the leading Jews at Cæsarea. **Crying** or *shouting out*, indicating their excited and intense feeling, when they affirmed that Paul was not worthy longer to live.

25. Festus tells the result of his own examination, directly opposite to the demand of the Jews. **And that he himself**, etc. Better, *He himself having appealed*. Festus does not state why he appealed, because instead of acquitting Paul he proposed his going up to Jerusalem for trial. (Ver. 9, 10.) Had Festus acted promptly on his con-

victions, Paul would have had no occasion to appeal. Thus Festus had put himself in an embarrassing position by his time-serving policy. **To Augustus**. (See on ver. 21.)

26. Paul had appealed to Cæsar and Festus had granted the appeal, yet he had **no certain thing to write**, no definite statement to make. It was customary to send to the emperor a written statement of the offence and proceedings against the prisoner. If the case should appear trivial it might expose him to criticism, perhaps to censure. **Unto my lord**. The accuracy of Luke is illustrated by this appellation of *lord* to the emperor. Both Augustus and Tiberius would not allow the corresponding Latin word *dominus* applied to themselves, because it implied the relation of master and slave. But early in the empire the custom grew of thus styling the emperor, and it became a part of established etiquette. Many Greek inscriptions have been found in Asia Minor and Egypt with this title, some of them inscribed to Nero. Caligula seems to have been the first to permit it. And a generation later Pliny, in his letters to Trajan, calls him *lord* more than seventy times. Festus as a Roman official would very likely use this title. As Luke soon after sailed with Paul, he probably heard him. The word *lord* had a wide meaning, implying possession of authority or power, applicable to political or social life, to men or to gods. See a discussion of the word in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, for July, 1861, pp. 595-608. **Examination**—as a law term among the Greeks this word was used of a preliminary investigation, for gathering evidence for the information of the judges.

nation had, I might have somewhat to 27 write. For it seemeth to me unreasonable

to send a prisoner, and not withal to signify the crimes *laid* against him.

17. For it seemeth to me unreasonable, etc. And he could have added, unlawful. Festus hoped to get a clearer view of the case, and fresh facts, so as to write more definitely. From this account of Luke, he appears to have been a just and reasonable man, which accords with the character given him by Josephus.

PRACTICAL REMARKS.

1. Rulers and judges and laws may change, but the Supreme Judge, Jesus Christ, ever lives and is ever the same. (Ver. 1; Heb. 13 : 8.)

2. Promptness and business-like traits are especially commendable in public officials. (Ver. 1-4.)

3. The Jews in their proceedings against Paul illustrate the hatred and persecution of wicked men against Christianity. (Ver. 2, 3; Rom. 8 : 7.)

4. God often protects his servants through worldly men, as he did Paul through the firmness of Festus. (Ver. 4, 5; Neh. 6 : 1 f.)

5. God had promised Paul that he should see Rome. (23 : 11.) How was his faith tested to be so often called to trial to no purpose. (Ver. 6; Rom. 1 : 13.)

6. It has been common for persecutors of Christians to bring charges that could not be sustained. (Ver. 7; 6 : 13; Mark 14 : 56, 57.)

7. A person in the right can generally make a simple and direct defense. (Ver. 8; John 18 : 20, 21.)

8. A love of popularity too often leads even honest men to deviate somewhat from the right path. (Ver. 9; Ps. 118 : 8, 9.)

9. Religious bigots are often more to be dreaded than the most absolute civil despots. (Ver. 10, 11.)

10. Civil government is of divine authority, and the Christian as a citizen or subject has a right to avail himself of its protection. (Ver. 10, 11; Rom. 13 : 1.)

11. God often answers the prayers of Christians in a way they little expect. Thus was Paul's prayers granted in going to Rome. (Ver. 12; Rom. 1 : 9, 10.)

12. In Agrippa we have an example of those who from curiosity desire to hear the gospel. (Ver. 13, 22.) Some prove to be way-side hearers (Matt. 13 : 19), and others like

Zaccheus are led to embrace the Saviour. (Luke 19 : 4-10.)

13. It is of the nature of human infirmity to justify ourselves, and set forth our own merits. (Ver. 13-21; 23 : 27.)

14. The heathen Romans were more rational and just than the highly privileged Jews. (Ver. 15, 16; Luke 11 : 31, 32.)

15. To condemn a man unheard is the very essence of tyranny, and should be practiced neither in church nor state. (Ver. 16.)

16. Civil magistrates are often wholly incompetent to judge in regard to spiritual matters. (Ver. 17-20.)

17. In Festus we have an example of a class of worldly men, who regard Christianity as a matter of indifference, to whom Christ is merely a "one Jesus." (Ver. 17-20; 18 : 14-17.)

18. The person of Christ, his life, death, and resurrection, are the great central themes of Christianity in all ages; and they have determined the whole system of theology, both in theory and practice. (Ver. 19.)

19. Paul did not fear death; but he would not recklessly throw away his life. Martyrdom is not to be sought, but rather avoided. (Ver. 20, 21.)

20. Agrippa's curious desire resulted in Paul's wonderful defence, and if not in his own good, in the good of all ages. (Ver. 22; ch. 26.)

21. Outward pomp often covers poverty of mind and character. (Ver. 23.)

22. Beauty, show, and princely grandeur pass away, but God's word endures forever. (Ver. 23-26; 1 Peter 1 : 24.)

23. Paul was every inch a man and a Christian, willing to stake his life for Christ and the truth, and ready to proclaim the gospel before all classes of men. (Ver. 24; 20 : 24; Rom. 15 : 19.)

24. As Christ was sent by Pilate to Herod, so Paul is placed before Agrippa. (Ver. 25, 26; Luke 23 : 7.)

25. In every age God's children have need to pray to be delivered from unreasonable men. (Ver. 27; 1 Thess. 3 : 5.)

26. The great tribunal is our last appeal. We may fail to get justice here, but we shall obtain full justice at the bar of God. (Ver. 24-27; 2 Cor. 5 : 10.)

Paul's address before King Agrippa.

26 THEN Agrippa said unto Paul,^m Thou art permitted to speak for thyself.

Then Paul stretched forth the hand, and answered for himself:

2 I think myself happy, king Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee touching all the things

3 whereof I am accused of the Jews: espe-

cially because I know thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews: wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently.

4 My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews; 5 which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most

^m ch. 25 : 16.

ⁿ ch. 22 : 3.

^o ch. 22 : 5.

^p ch. 23 : 6; Phil. 3 : 5.

Ch. 26 : 1-32. PAUL'S DEFENCE BEFORE KING AGRIPPA. (Rom. 15 : 18, 19. See on 9 : 1-30; 22 : 2-21.) Regarding the three accounts of Paul's conversion, see introductory remarks to 9 : 1-22. This defense occurred probably about the middle of August, A. D. 60.

1. Festus having stated the case (25 : 24-27), and the company being in waiting, **King Agrippa** assumes the presidency of the assembly. With his usual courtesy (25 : 22), he says, not "I permit thee," but **Thou art permitted to speak**, in deference to Festus, the governor. **For thyself**—yet, rather, for Jesus, the Christ, who had called him into his kingdom and made him his minister and apostle. **Then Paul stretched forth his hand**—the usual gesture in addressing a public assembly; now especially impressive by the chain which hung from it. (Ver. 29.) Similar, though not exactly the same, as *the beckoning*, or shaking the hand to secure attention in 13 : 16; 19 : 33. **Answered for himself**—or *made his defense*, not so much to prove his innocence, for he was not now on trial, as to explain the reason of his becoming a Christian and preaching the gospel. It is one of the most wonderful addresses recorded in history. It consists *first*, of a few courteous introductory words (ver. 2, 3); *second*, a glance at his early life and at Israel's hope, for which he stands accused of the Jews (ver. 4-7); *third*, relates his conversion as an evidence of the Messiahship and resurrection of Jesus (ver. 8-15); *fourth*, his appointment as a minister and apostle (ver. 16-18); and *fifth*, his obedience to the heavenly vision, in preaching the gospel to both Jews and Gentiles. (Ver. 19-24.)

2. **I think myself happy**, etc.—after so many attempts to make himself understood before such men as

Lysias, Felix, and Festus, Paul could congratulate himself in now addressing one who could understand and appreciate his case. His compliment to Agrippa was a courteous acknowledgment of his acquaintance with Jewish hopes, customs, and controversies.

3. **Especially because I know thee to be expert**, etc.—rather, *Especially since thou art an expert in all customs, civil and religious, whether established by law or usage, and questions*, subjects of disputes among Jews, both among themselves and between the sects. Agrippa was professedly a Jew, and had had great opportunities for knowing these matters; and as a crowned vassal of the Roman Empire he also had thorough knowledge of Roman affairs among the Jews. The Rabbinic writers speak of him as excelling in his knowledge of the law and traditions. "And as the traditions which they follow could not have flowed from this passage, it confirms the representations here by an unexpected agreement." (HACKETT.)

4. In this and the next verse Paul speaks of his early training, belief and conduct. **At the first**—better, *from the beginning*. Though born at Tarsus, he always dwelt among his own people. **At Jerusalem**, or, according to the oldest manuscripts, *And at Jerusalem*. He came early to Jerusalem for his education. (22 : 3.) **Know all the Jews**—he was generally known by his attainments, his prominence among them, and as a leader in the persecution against Christians. (9 : 1, 2.)

5. Paul says *from my youth* in the preceding verse; here **from the beginning**, or *from the first*, implying knowledge of him from his very childhood. **If they would**, or *were willing to testify*. There were those

staitest sect of our religion I lived a
6 Pharisee. And now I stand and am
judged for the hope of the promise made
7 of God unto our fathers: unto which
promise our twelve tribes, instantly
serving God day and night, hope to

come. For which hope's sake, king
8 Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews. Why
should it be thought a thing incredible
with you that God should raise the
dead?
9 I verily thought with myself, that I

q ch. 23 : 6. r ch. 13 : 32-37; Gen. 12 : 3; 22 : 18; 26 : 4; 28 : 14; 49 : 10; Deut. 18 : 15;
2 Sam. 7 : 12; Ps. 132 : 11; Isa. 9 : 6; 7; Jer. 23 : 5; 33 : 14-16; Ezek. 34 : 23; Dan. 9 : 24; Rom.
15 : 8; Titus 2 : 13. s James 1 : 1. t Luke 2 : 3. u see Luke 2 : 25, 38. x Gen. 18 : 14;
Matt. 22 : 29-32; 1 Cor. 15 : 12-20. y John 16 : 2; 1 Tim. 1 : 13.

among his accusers who knew him from his early years, and his strict manner of life. Compare his appeal to the mob in his address from the tower steps. (22 : 5.) **The most straitest—rather, the strictest sect, or party.** (See on 24 : 14.) In the epistles the word only occurs in the plural and used in a bad sense, meaning “heresies” or “factions.” (1 Cor. 11 : 18; Gal. 5 : 20; 2 Peter 2 : 1.) **Of our religion—of our religious discipline,** having special reference to the external observances and ceremonies of Judaism. **I lived a Pharisee.** The Pharisees were divided into two classes: The followers of Hillel, the more liberal, embracing such men as Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea, and Gamaliel; and the followers of Shammai, the more rigid in spirit, to which Paul had attached himself, not merely professedly, but practically and heartily, he lived it. Compare his description of himself in Phil. 3 : 4-6.

6. **And now,** at this time, in contrast with what I was in the past, **I stand here on trial for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers.** (Gen. 12 : 3.) This promise was of the Messiah and his kingdom. (See 13 : 32, 33.) This brief reference was all that was necessary for Agrippa. A fuller description might be misunderstood by Festus. The Jews expected that the Messiah would establish a universal kingdom; Paul saw the spiritual nature of this kingdom, of which Jesus Christ was the Head and Lord. (28 : 28-31; 1 Cor. 15 : 25-28.) In this he implies that so far from leaving his old religion, he was faithfully adhering to it.

7. **Unto which—promise,** is understood, and is supplied in both the Common and Revised Versions. **The twelve tribes—one word in the original,** used collectively of the whole

Israelitish people, as at first composed of twelve tribes, and as now representing them. Some of the ten tribes returned from Babylon with Judah and Benjamin, and the priests and Levites. (Ezra 1 : 5-11; 6 : 17; 8 : 35.) Anna (Luke 2 : 36) was of the tribe of Asher, and Paul of the tribe of Benjamin. James addresses his Epistle (1 : 1) “to the twelve tribes that are scattered abroad.” **Instantly, rather, earnestly serving God day and night—**special reference to habitual worship in rites and ceremonies, in fasting and prayers. (Luke 2 : 37; 1 Tim. 5 : 5.) **Hope to come**—to attain unto the fulfillment of this promise, and enjoy its blessings. **For which hope's sake**—the hope of the suffering and risen Christ, who in consummating his kingdom will prove himself to be a King of kings and Lord of lords. But strange to say, for this very hope practically believed and held, **I am accused of the Jews.** Emphatic words, marking the inconsistency of the Jews.

8. The words just uttered would remind Agrippa that Paul preached the resurrection of Jesus. It was the central fact of Christianity, the great subject of discussion between Christians and Jews, and had been referred to by Festus to Agrippa. (25 : 19.) In view of this, uppermost in his mind, and prominent in the mind of Agrippa, Paul exclaims, **Why should it be thought,** etc. Rather, *Why is it judged incredible with you,* including all present, also the Jews of whom you, king Agrippa, form a part, *if God raises the dead? With you is in the plural.* Is it strange in view of the past history of our race? (1 Kings 17 : 17-23; 2 Kings 4 : 18-37; 13 : 21.) If not, why should I be accused of crime for holding it?

9. Paul proceeds to state that he

ought to do many things contrary to the 10 name of Jesus of Nazareth. ² Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, hav-

ing received authority ^a from the chief priests: and when they were put to death, 11 I gave my voice against them. ^b And I punished them oft in every synagogue,

^a ch. 7 : 58 ; 8 : 1, 3.

^a ch. 9 : 14, 21 ; 22 : 5.

^b ch. 22 : 19.

..

was once in a like state of incredulity regarding the resurrection of Jesus, and to relate how he was convinced of the fact. **I verily**—*I indeed*, in a like spirit of incredulity, **therefore thought with myself**, exercising my independent judgment in the spirit of Pharisaic self-reliance, **that I ought to do many things**. He acted sincerely and conscientiously. (23 : 1.) **Contrary to the name of Jesus**—who was represented by his disciples and his cause. Names often express personality and character. (Gen. 32 : 28 ; Num. 13 : 16 ; 1 Sam. 4 : 21.) *Name* was often used of God in the Old Testament in reference to his perfections and Godhead. (Exod. 3 : 13, 14 ; 33 : 19 ; 5 : 7 ; Ps. 29 : 2 ; 34 : 3 ; 61 : 5.) *The name of Jesus* frequently occurs in the Acts, denoting all that it implies, the Saviour, the Messiah, the Lord, Prophet, Priest, and King. On it men were to believe (3 : 16) ; in it to be baptized (2 : 38) ; through it miracles were performed (3 : 6) ; and men alone could be saved (4 : 12) ; and for it the early preachers hazarded their lives. (15 : 26.)

10. In this verse Paul tells what he did in Jerusalem. First receiving the garments at Stephen's martyrdom. (7 : 58.) **Many of the saints I shut up in prison**, rather, *prisons*, according to the best reading. Entering house after house, he laid hold of both men and women. (See on 8 : 3.) Notice he uses the word *saints* here, which occurs neither in Luke's account of Paul's conversion, nor in Paul's speech before the Jewish mob. (9 : 1, 2 ; 22 : 4, 5.) Here Paul enjoys great freedom, and speaks freely (ver. 3), and applies to the disciples an honorable title, which Agrippa would understand, and yet which would not be specially offensive to him and his hearers present, and at the same time would indicate the greatness of his own guilt. **When they were put to death**—Stephen and others. (22 : 4.) In these accounts we get but a glimpse of his "breathing out threatening and slaughter." (9 : 1.)

I gave my voice—literally, *I cast my pebble*, that is, *my vote*, **against them**. In ancient courts the accused was condemned by black pebbles, and acquitted by white ones. Such a phrase was sometimes used in the sense of giving assent, *approving*. Hence some suppose that Saul was a member of the Sanhedrin, while others regard it as improbable on account of various reasons, and explain the phrase of his moral assent and approval. The words naturally imply that he was a member of some tribunal before which Christians were brought; and as Jewish law allowed the infliction of the death penalty only to the Sanhedrin, it has been thought he was a member of that body. In that case, according to the Rabbins, he must have been at least thirty years old. The later Rabbins say that a necessary qualification of membership was to be married and have children. That Paul was married, and afterward a widower, has been advocated by Ewald and Farrar. (*Life of St. Paul*, pp. 45, 95.) The Jews held the marriage relation in high esteem, and persons were married early. In 1 Cor. 9 : 5 Paul claimed the right to a married life, but regarded the unmarried state as better fitted for his work. 1 Cor. 7 : 8 may not be decisive, but its implication is stronger on the side that he never was married, than that he was a widower. This question, as well as that of his membership of the Sanhedrin, cannot be positively settled.

11. In this verse Paul tells how he carried on his persecution. I punished them oft in every, better, *in all the synagogues*, at Jerusalem, and the places in Judea, whither he went. Scourging was the customary form of punishment inflicted in the synagogues. (See Matt. 10 : 17.) **Compelled them**—by threats and by torture to **blaspheme, to rail at Christ and the gospel**, that is, to renounce their faith. (13 : 45 ; James 2 : 7.) The language does

and compelled *them* to blaspheme: and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted *them* even unto strange cities.

12 ^e Whereupon as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests, at mid-day, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed

14 with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew

tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? *It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.* And I said, Who art, thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, ^d to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which ^e I will appear unto thee: delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, ^f unto whom now I

^e ch. 9 : 2-22; 22 : 6.

^d ch. 22 : 15.

^e ch. 18 : 9; 22 : 18; 23 : 11; 2 Cor. 12 : 1; Gal. 1 : 12;

Eph. 3 : 3.

^f ch. 22 : 21.

not necessarily mean that any did thus actually blaspheme; and hence the Revised Version renders, "I strove to make them blaspheme." That some weak ones temporarily denied Christ, like Peter, and some outward disciples apostatized is probable. (2 Tim. 1 : 15; 4 : 10.) **Being exceedingly mad, against them**—though conscientious, he was in a paroxysm of excitement, through pride, prejudice, and hatred—I persecuted them even unto strange, that is, *foreign cities*.

12. **Whereupon**—while thus employed as I went to Damascus. Here he gives an account of his conversion. On this verse, see on 9 : 1, 2.

13 **At midday**—it was no nocturnal vision. (22 : 6.) In addition to the previous accounts, Paul describes the light, as **above the brightness of the sun**. There could therefore be no doubt that this was a supernatural light. (See on 9 : 3.)

14. **That the voice spoke in the Hebrew**, is recorded only here. (See on 9 : 4.) **It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks, the goads**. These words are only found here, according to the oldest and best manuscripts. (See on 9 : 5.) A well-known proverb. The figure is from the driven ox. The driver using a goad instead of a whip pricks him, who, ignorantly kicking back, receives another wound. So it is implied, it had been with Saul. God had been dealing with him, ever since he had met with Stephen, when he was baffled by him in argument. (6 : 19.) His conscience had been touched, and his heart troubled. But he recoiled from the true light. (John 3 : 20.) In ignorance and prejudice he rushes madly on, and tries to crush any promptings of

the Spirit, and any misgivings or disquietude of soul. (Rom. 7 : 7-11.)

15. **Who art thou, Lord?** On this verse see on ch. 9 : 5.

16. Passing over the Lord's command to go into Damascus, as only incidental to the purpose of his address, Paul relates how the Lord at once commissioned him as a missionary and an apostle to the Gentiles. (See near the end of the note on 9 : 6.) **For I have appeared unto thee**. In after days Paul declares that he had seen the Lord. (1 Cor. 9 : 1; 15 : 8. See on 9 : 3.) **To make thee, better, to appoint thee a minister**—the same as in 22 : 14; denoting that he was deliberately selected and appointed. **And a witness both of the things which thou hast seen, etc.** Some ancient manuscripts read, *of the things wherein thou hast seen me*, which is adopted by the Revised Version. But the common reading is well sustained. The meaning is essentially the same with either reading. To have seen the Lord was a necessary qualification to being an apostle. (1 : 21, 22) **And of those things in the which I will appear unto thee**. Paul appears to have been favored above the rest of the apostles in visions and revelations. (18 : 9; 22 : 18; 23 : 11; 27 : 23; 2 Cor. 12 : 1-7.)

17. **Delivering thee from the people, the Jews, and from the Gentiles, the heathen**. How often must this promise have cheered him all through his troubled and checkered ministerial life, which he so graphically and touchingly describes in 2 Cor. 6 : 4-10; 11 : 23-27. **Unto whom now I send thee**. Now should be omitted, according to the best text. *I* is emphatic. *Send* is the verb from

18 send thee, ^gto open their eyes, and ^hto turn *them* from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and ⁱinheritance among them which are ^ksanctified by faith that is in me.

19 Whereupon, O king Agrippa, ^lI was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision:

but ^mshowed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judæa, and *then* to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do ⁿworks meet for repentance.

21 For these causes ^othe Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill

^g Isa. 35 : 5 ; 42 : 7 ; Luke 1 : 79.

^h Eph. 5 : 8 ; Col. 1 : 13 ; 1 Peter 2 : 9.

ⁱ Rom. 8 : 17 ;

Gal. 3 : 29 ; Col. 1 : 12.

^k ch. 20 : 32.

^l Gal. 1 : 16.

^m ch. 9 : 20, 22, 29 ; 11 : 26 ; ch. 13 to ch. 21 ; Rom. 15 : 19.

ⁿ Matt. 3 : 8.

^o ch. 21 : 30, 31.

which the noun "apostle" comes ; and thus may include the idea of his apostleship. It is in the present tense, implying that his ministry is to begin at once. It seems that Paul knew of his mission to the Gentiles from the very first. (Gal. 1 : 16.) Compare the Scriptural phraseology, Jer. 1 : 7.

18. The object and success of his ministry is presented, which was full of encouragement. The object: **To open their eyes.** If the eyes of Jews and Gentiles were opened, then they would turn, which accords with the more correct translation: *To open their eyes that they may turn from darkness to light.* Old Testament phraseology. (Isa. 42 : 7, 16.) Christ is the light of the world, and his gospel brings light. (Luke 2 : 32 ; 1 Peter 2 : 9 ; Col. 1 : 13.) **From the power of Satan**, who is the prince, and the god of this world. (John 12 : 31 ; 2 Cor. 4 : 4 ; 1 John 5 : 19.) **Unto God**—the rightful Lord, in whom is light, and who through Christ will destroy the works of the devil. (1 John 5 : 8 ; 3 : 8.) **That they may receive the forgiveness of sins**, etc.—the immediate result of turning to God. **And inheritance among them that are sanctified**—made heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. (See on 20 : 32.) Here "sanctified," as well as "saint" in Paul's Epistles, is applied to those who are in the way of salvation, and not to those who are perfect in holiness. The last clause should simply be, *By faith in me.* It is through faith in Christ that they are to receive the remission of sins, and all that follows.

19. From these facts Paul proceeds to justify his change of position, and his subsequent ministry. **Whereupon . . . I was not disobedient**—more exactly, *did not become disobe-*

dient, as selfish interests might have inclined me, in view of the trials and hardships connected with a life of active and positive service for Christ. He did not confer with flesh and blood. (Gal. 1 : 16.) **The heavenly vision**, of Jesus and of his will, was plainly a sufficient cause and reason for the great change in his life and work.

20. **But shewed**—*announced* and kept on announcing. This in the original is joined to **repent and turn**, etc. Paul in his preaching, wherever he went, was accustomed to enforce three things: *repentance*, including a change of purpose, a sorrow for and a forsaking of sin—*turning to God*, implying faith and including a desire and a striving to do his will ; and **works worthy of repentance**, a life of practical godliness, as the fruits and evidence of repentance. (17 : 30 ; 14 : 15 ; 20 : 21 ; Col. 1 : 28. Compare Isa. 55 : 6, 7 ; Luke 3 : 8-14.) The places here named where he preached were **first at Damascus**, where he was converted (9 : 27) ; also at **Jerusalem**, where he disputed with the Grecian Jews (9 : 28, 29), and throughout **all the coasts**, the *region of Judea* (11 : 30 ; 12 : 24, 25 ; 15 : 3, 4) ; and also to the **Gentiles**. (9 : 30 ; 22 : 21 ; 11 : 25, 26.) Paul appears here specially to describe his earlier ministry before beginning the first of the three great missionary tours ; but by the last clause, *to the Gentiles*, he glances through his later labors.

21. **For these causes**—*on account of these things*, just stated : preaching the gospel, especially to the Gentiles. The latter was his great and unpardonable offence in the eyes of the Jews. (22 : 21.) **The Jews caught**, *seized me* with violence. **Went about**—better, *attempted to kill me*, in the riot in the

22 *me*. Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, ^awitnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those ^cwhich the prophets and ^bMoses did say should 23 come: ^dthat Christ should suffer, and ^ethat he should be the first that should

rise from the dead, and ^fshould show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles. 24 And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, ^gthou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad.

^a 2 Cor. 1 : 8-10 ; 6 : 10 ; 2 Tim. 4 : 17, 18. ^b ch. 20 : 20-27. ^c ch. 24 : 14 ; 28 : 23 ; Rom. 3 : 21. ^d John 5 : 46. ^e Luke 24 : 26, 27, 46. ^f 1 Cor. 15 : 20-23 ; Col. 1 : 18 ; Rev. 1 : 5. ^g Luke 2 : 32. ^h 2 Kings 9 : 11 ; Mark 3 : 21 ; John 10 : 20 ; 1 Cor. 2 : 13, 14 ; 4 : 10 ; 2 Cor. 5 : 13.

temple, and afterward by their plots. (21 : 21 ; 23 : 12.) Compare this fuller statement with the briefer one in ver. 6.

22. Having therefore obtained help of God — *having experienced succor that is from God*, referring to the many deliverances during the whole course of his ministry. (18 : 9.) *Therefore*, emphasizes the divine help, which had enabled him **to continue or stand, unto this day**, notwithstanding the many persecutions which he had endured. (2 Cor. 4 : 7-12 ; 11 : 23-27.) Thus he had stood his ground, **witnessing or testifying both to small and great** — to persons of both low and high rank; for example, to the women at Philippi, and now to this most august assembly in Palestine. **Saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come**. He was in perfect agreement with the prophets, and in his teachings has not gone beyond what they had foretold. And he adds, as if it were an after-thought, *and Moses*, whose law they charged him with breaking, whose teaching with perverting. (21 : 21.)

23. Paul states the three great questions of discussion between Christians and Jews, first, regarding a suffering Messiah; second, his resurrection; third, his mission, alike to Jews and Gentiles. **That Christ should suffer**—better, *Whether the Christ should suffer*. "The apostle, as I understand, approaches the question on the Jewish side of it, not on the Christian; and that was, whether the Messiah, being such as many of the Jews expected, could suffer, not whether he must suffer, in order to fulfill the Scriptures." (HACKETT.) Of course in these discussions, he *testified* (ver. 22) to the fulfillment of prophecy in the sufferings

of Jesus as the Christ. **That he should be the first**, etc.; *Whether the first that should rise from the dead should proclaim light*, etc. In this discussion Paul affirmed that Christ should be the first-begotten from the dead, the second Adam. (1 Cor. 15 : 20-23.) His resurrection was an earnest of the general resurrection. In thus holding to the resurrection of Jesus, he could say before the Sanhedrin, "For the hope of the resurrection of the dead I am called in question." (23 : 6.) And so Christ brought life and immortality to light. (2 Tim. 1 : 10.) If Paul proved to his opponents that Christ should suffer and die, it would be easy to show that then he must rise from the dead. (2 : 24-31 ; 13 : 32-37.) The risen Christ was to be a Herald of light, of truth. But to whom? Was he to be both **to the people**, that is the Jews, **and to the Gentiles**? Paul took the affirmative, and showed that this was the teachings of Moses and the prophets, from such passages as Isa. 42 : 6 ; 49 : 6 ; 60 : 1-3 ; Gen. 15 : 18. (Compare Luke 2 : 32.)

24. Such a defense including such a gospel discourse sounded strange to Festus' ears. While Christ crucified was a stumbling-block to the Jew, it was foolishness to the Gentile. (1 Cor. 1 : 23.) To the cool and skeptical Roman Paul's enthusiasm regarding the resurrection of Jesus, and his gospel for the whole world, seemed like the frenzy of a fanatic. Festus seems to forget where he is and the decorum of the occasion, and deeply absorbed in listening and thinking, cries out **with a loud voice**, indicating surprise and earnestness, **Paul, thou art beside thyself, or mad**. "Festus saw that nature was not working in Paul; grace he did not see; therefore thought it a Jewish frenzy." (BENGEL.) **Much learning**, literally

25 But he said, *I am not mad, *most noble Festus; but speak forth ^vthe
26 words of truth and soberness. For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are

hidden from him; for ^ethis thing was not
27 done in a corner. King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest.

28 Then Agrippa said unto Paul, ^dAlmost

* John 8 : 49. * Prov. 15 : 1; Col. 4 : 6. ^b Titus 2 : 7, 8. ^c ch. 2 : 1-12; 4 : 16-22; Luke 24 : 19. ^d Mark 6 : 20; 10 : 17-22; James 1 : 23, 24.

many letters, which may refer either to the many writings Paul had read, or to the knowledge he had obtained from them, his reputed attainments. Festus had doubtless heard of Paul, as distinguished among the Jews for his scholarship; and it was natural for a Roman, and a heathen, to imagine that much Jewish learning, especially in the Scripture, would **make one mad**. More exactly, *Turns thee to madness*. A little less literally, Alford well renders, *Is turning thy brain*. He evidently spoke seriously, not jestingly, as the answer of Paul naturally implies.

25. I am not mad. A calm and courteous reply, a model to all under trying circumstances. **Most noble**, better, *excellent Festus*. So Felix was addressed (23 : 26), on which see. **Words of truth**—facts, and not the imaginations of a disordered brain. **Soberness** or *saneness*, as opposed to madness.

26. He could not hope to convince a heathen who thought his words were like the ravings of a mad man. He therefore appeals to Agrippa whose education fitted him to appreciate his arguments, and to see in his great sacrifices for his conscientious convictions a heroism like that of the old prophets. **None of these things are hidden from him**—concerning the life and works, the death and resurrection, of Jesus, and the subsequent preaching and spread of the gospel. The king was familiar with these facts and therefore Paul could speak before him **freely** or **boldly**. **For this thing**, this whole affair, *has not been done in a corner*. Christianity was not born, nor was it reared in secret. Jesus had spoken and wrought openly; and the Pharisees exclaimed, “The world is gone after him.” (John 12 : 19.) And he was crucified at Jerusalem, and during the passover. The apostles aroused the nation (5 : 28);

and in foreign lands the cry went up against them, “These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also.” (17 : 6.)

27. Perceiving the power he was exerting over Agrippa, Paul determines to push his appeal, and turn the king's convictions to his own advantage. **Believest thou the prophets?** who foretold those things which correspond so closely to the history of Jesus. As a Jew Agrippa professed to believe them. Yet Paul awaits not an answer; but answers it himself, being assured of what it would be. **I know that thou believest**—not merely from political and selfish motives, arising from his family and Jewish connections; but from conviction. So assured is he that Agrippa believed in the prophets as inspired men, that he exclaims, *I know*. It would be very tame to suppose that he only meant, “I think” or “conjecture that you believe.”

28. Expositors differ much regarding the exact meaning of the original here, and the corresponding phrase, “almost and altogether,” of the next verse. It is generally agreed that the rendering of the Common Version, **Almost**, etc., held by Chrysostom, Luther, and others, is incorrect. The Greek is, *In little thou persuadest me to become a Christian*, and in the next verse, *both in little and much*, or *both in little and great*. Some with Hackett, Neander, and others, refer this to time, *In a little time*, etc. But to this it is objected, that the Greek reading for *much* or *great*, in the next verse, now approved by the highest authorities, must be used not in a temporal but a quantitative sense, *in a great amount*. Hence Meyer and others prefer to translate, *With little effort*, or *With a little utterance*, that is, *With a few words*, as the phrase is rendered in Eph. 3 : 3. Accordingly the Bible Union Version reads, *With little pains*

thou persuadest me to be a Christian.
29 And Paul said, ^c I would to God, that not
only thou, but also all that hear me this

day, were both almost, and altogether
such as I am, except these bonds.
30 And when he had thus spoken, the king

^c Rom. 9 : 1-3; 10 : 1.

thou persuadest me to be a Christian. The Revised Version paraphrases thus, *With but little persuasion thou wouldest fain make me a Christian.* Both versions give the alternate reading in the margin, *In little time.* And both render the phrase in the next verse, *with little or much.* An objection to these views is that they involve Paul's reply in a peculiar phraseology, and force the *and* into the sense of *or*, which is not authorized in Greek.

The most natural and the simplest view, and the one most free from objection, is to take the words just as they stand, in the sense of *degree* or *measure*, *In a little degree thou persuadest me to be a Christian*; thus courteously acknowledging some force to his arguments. This is substantially that of Tyndale and Cramner, *Somewhat thou persuadest me*, etc., and adopted by Alexander. It presents also a present fact, indicated by the present tense, *Thou persuadest.* It also gives the phrase in the next verse a natural and grammatically correct rendering, *I could pray God, that both in a little degree and in a great degree, not only thou, etc.* So also the Improved Bible Union Version, following the reading of some of the oldest manuscripts, translates "Thou somewhat persuadest me to make me a Christian." Another question much discussed is regarding the spirit in which Agrippa spoke. Those who would supply the idea of *time* or *effort* after *little*, generally assume that Agrippa spoke sarcastically or in irony. But of this there is no intimation in the whole passage, and at least is not in close harmony with Paul's reply. It has been said that Agrippa would not have used the word *Christian*, which was one of ill-repute, in any other way than in irony or sarcasm. But *Christian* was becoming a common name, applied to believers generally by those from without. It was doubtless the easiest and most natural way for Agrippa to designate a disciple. (See on 11 : 26.) It seems there-

fore better to regard his answer as a courtly and complimentary appreciation of Paul's eloquence, acknowledging some force to the facts and the truths Paul had uttered regarding Jesus Christ and the prophets. This accords also with Agrippa's courtesy exemplified elsewhere. (25 : 22 ; 26 : 1.) If this be correct, it then confirms the view advocated in these notes, that Paul did produce some impression on Agrippa, which he courteously and perhaps evasively admitted. That he was impressed favorably with what Paul said is evident from his subsequent words. (Ver. 32.)

29. I would to God—*I could willingly pray God* were I guided by the wish of my heart; I could give vent even now to audible supplication, if it would not offend, even though it might be unavailing. Yet his words were a prayer, not only for Agrippa, but also for Festus and the whole company. **Were both almost**, etc.—rather, *that both in a little degree, and in a great degree, not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, may become such as I am.* (See on ver. 28.) Paul intimates that he would have the degree sufficiently great to secure proper results. **Except these bonds**—doubtless holding up the hand from which the chain was suspended. That they might have his joys and his hopes, without the persecution, was the best prayer he could offer for them. There is a beautiful courtesy and tenderness in his language. With a nice delicacy he refrains from using the name *Christian*, lest his wish might in any way suggest or savor of reproach. Truly Paul was helped by God (ver. 22) through the Holy Spirit. (Mark 10 : 19, 20.)

30. The words When he had thus spoken are not found in the oldest and best manuscripts. **The king rose up**, etc.—and thus the spell produced by Paul's eloquence was broken. Notice **Bernice** is again mentioned, as if a principal figure in the gathering. **They that sat with**

rose up, and the governor, and Bernice,
31 and they that sat with them: and when
they were gone aside, they talked between
themselves, saying, 'This man doeth

nothing worthy of death or of bonds.
32 Then said Agrippa unto Festus, This man
might have been set at liberty, if he had
not appealed unto Cæsar.

f ch. 23 : 9, 29 ; 25 : 25.

g ch. 23 : 11.

them—the chief captains and principal men of Cæsaræa. (25 : 23.) Such details evidently came from an eye-witness.

31. Having gone aside for consultation, *they talked together, saying, This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds*—a full acknowledgment of Paul's innocence. And so all along it had been admitted. (Ch. 23 : 24 : 22 ; 25 : 18, 19, 25.)

32. **This man might have been set at liberty, etc.**—Agrippa's verdict, looking both from a Roman and Jewish standpoint. In his *Words of the Apostle*, Stier calls attention to the fact, that at the outbreak of the great Jewish war, some eight years after this scene, Agrippa protected the Christians, receiving them kindly into his territory. But though Paul was innocent, yet through Festus' course, he had been compelled to appeal to Cæsar. And this put it out of the power of a lower court either to condemn or to acquit. But God was overruling, so that Paul might go to Rome and labor there. (Gen. 50 : 20.) Festus probably commended Paul to the clemency of Cæsar. (28 : 16.)

PRACTICAL REMARKS.

1. We should always be in readiness to give a reason of the faith that is in us. (Ver. 1 ; 1 Peter 3 : 15.)

2. We should set an example in our speech, speaking the truth in courtesy. (Ver. 2 ; 2 Tim. 2 : 24 ; Titus 3 : 2.)

3. Christianity can well demand a patient hearing before intelligent men. (Ver. 3 ; Luke 1 : 1-4.)

4. Strict religious training in early life is often one of the preparations of great preachers. (Ver. 4, 5 ; 1 Tim. 1 : 5, 6.)

5. The law and the gospel are not antagonistic. The hopes of the former are realized through the latter. (Ver. 6, 7 ; Rom. 8 : 3, 5.)

6. The Messiah of the Old Testament is Jesus Christ of the New. (Ver. 7 ; Luke 24 : 27.)

7. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is a well attested and fundamental fact of Christianity. (Ver. 7 : 8 ; 1 Cor. 15 : 1-16.)

8. In view of God, as Almighty, as the Creator, the Author of life, and the Preserver of our being, the doctrine of the resurrection is perfectly reasonable. (Ver. 8 ; 17 : 24-31.)

9. Sincerity is not religion. Conscience may be wrongly trained, or perverted by passion or prejudice. (Ver. 9 ; John 16 : 2.)

10. Men are responsible for their convictions as well as for their conduct. (Ver. 9, 10 ; Luke 19 : 22, 23.)

11. Further on ver. 10-15, see Practical Remarks, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 8 upon ch. 9.

12. Every Christian is called into Christ's kingdom for some purpose and work. (Ver. 16 ; 1 Cor. 7 : 20-24.)

13. Preachers are called to be servants and witnesses of Christ. (Ver. 16 ; Mark 10 : 44, 45 ; Heb. 5 : 4.)

14. No man is qualified for the ministry without experimental knowledge of Jesus Christ, so as to testify of him. (Ver. 16 ; Rom. 10 : 14, 15.)

15. Whoever is called into the ministry has the promise of the divine protection and care. (Ver. 17 ; Matt. 25 : 20.)

16. The ministry is intended for the instruction and conversion of men, and for perfecting the saints in the divine life. (Ver. 18 ; Eph. 4 : 11-13.)

17. Forgiveness of sins and a title to heaven is only assured through faith in Christ. (Ver. 18 ; Rom. 8 : 1.)

18. We are not mere machines in God's service, but we must exercise our reason, judgment and will in obeying God. (Ver. 19 ; Gal. 1 : 16.)

19. True repentance is evidenced by a life of godliness and obedience to the commands of God. (Ver. 20 ; Matt. 3 : 8, 9.)

20. The place for the young convert to begin work for Christ is where he is, and where he is known. (Ver. 20 ; Mark 5 : 19.)

21. It is only through help from God that Christians and ministers continue in his service. (Ver. 22 ; 1 Sam. 7 : 12.)

22. Christian ministers should not go be-

yond the word of God in their preaching. (Ver. 22; Isa. 8: 20.)

23. Jesus should be preached both as a suffering and a risen Christ, and as a Saviour suited for all people. (Ver. 23; Matt. 28: 19.)

24. The world often thinks the earnestness, devotion, and sacrifices of Christians fanaticism or madness. (Ver. 24; Mark 3: 21; 2 Cor. 5: 13.)

25. The only truly sober people in the world are the servants of Christ. (Ver. 25; Luke 15: 17.)

26. Christians can appeal to facts and to the consciences of men in proof of Christianity. (Ver. 26; 2 Cor. 4: 2.)

27. Many give an intellectual reception to the truth, but believe not from the heart. (Ver. 27; Rom. 10: 9, 10.)

28. Pride, worldly station, and their immediate surroundings often keep persons from giving anything but a slight assent to the claims of the Christian religion. (Ver. 28; Luke 13: 24.)

29. We should earnestly pray that faint impressions may become deep ones, and that small beginnings may result in the salvation of the soul. (Ver. 29; Phil. 1: 1-6.)

30. Chains of iron with a hope in Christ are better than royalty with an unrenewed heart. (Ver. 29.)

31. The most faithful appeals of the gospel, if respectful and courteous, may be made without offence, and result in good. (Ver. 30-32.)

Ch. 27: In this chapter Luke gives an account of Paul's last recorded voyage from Cæsarea, and his shipwreck on the island of Malta. It is the most remarkable document of antiquity regarding the ships and navigation of the ancients. Its exactness of details in its geographical references, and its use of nautical terms, are strong evidences of the trustworthiness of the book. The style though accurate is unprofessional. "No sailor would have written in a style so little like a sailor; no man not a sailor would have written a narrative of a sea voyage so consistent in all its parts, unless from actual observation. This peculiarity of style is to me, in itself, a demonstration that the narrative of the voyage is an account written by an eye-witness.

A similar remark may be made on the geographical details. They must have been taken from actual observation, for the geographical knowledge of the age was not such as to enable a writer to be so minutely accurate in any other way." (JAMES SMITH, ESQ., *Voyage and Shipwreck of St. Paul*, Fourth Edition, 1880, p. xlv.) To this standard work I am largely indebted in this chapter.

SHIPS of the ancients. Some knowledge of these is necessary for the correct understanding of this chapter. Below the upper works of the ancient ship the prow and stern were alike. There was commonly one mast in the centre with its large square main sail. Triangular top sails seem to have been known among the Romans. A fore sail was used at the prow. The hinged rudder at the stern was then unknown, the ships being steered with two paddle rudders, one on each side of the stern. The prow was generally ornamented with figures, commonly an eye, on each side. The stern was variously adorned, especially with an image of the guardian deity of the vessel. The merchant ships of the Mediterranean were of large size, some of them quite equaling the dimensions of the largest ones of the present day. (Ver. 31.) The great ship of Ptolemy Philadelphus, the *Isis*, described by Lucian in one of his dialogues, was one hundred and eighty feet long, forty-five feet wide, and forty-five and one-half feet from the top of the deck to the bottom of the hold. It has been estimated to have been of over one thousand tons burden. In speed ancient merchant vessels compared quite favorably with those of modern times. At one time Cato held up a fresh fig in the Roman Senate, exclaiming, "This fruit was gathered fresh at Carthage three days ago." With a fair wind a vessel could probably sail seven knots or miles an hour. (See 16: 11; 20: 7-15.) A question of special importance is that of the capability of an ancient ship in sailing near the wind. It is known that fair progress could be made when the course of the ship was less than a right angle with the direction of the wind. Taking the usual divisions of the compass into thirty-

Voyage from Cesarea to Italy; shipwreck at Melita

27 AND when ^b it was determined that we should sail into Italy, they delivered Paul

and certain other prisoners unto one named Julius, a centurion of Augustus' ² band. And entering into a ship of Adramyttium, we launched, meaning to sail

^b ch. 25 : 12, 25.

two points, a modern vessel can in average circumstances sail within six points of the wind; and Mr. Smith estimates that an ancient vessel could sail within seven points. It must also be borne in mind that the ancients were without the compass, and without exact chronometers. Instruments for observations were imperfect, and charts were almost unknown. Hence they were careful in venturing out of sight of land. They were dependent on observing the sun by day and the stars by night, and were especially careful and solicitous in cloudy weather.

CHRONOLOGY. A definite note of time is given in 27 : 9, *the fast*, which in A. D. 60 occurred on September 23, from which we can reckon both forward and backward. Now the voyage from Cesarea to Sidon occupied over a day (ver. 3); a week may be allowed for the circuitous voyage to Myra (ver. 5), ten or twelve days for sailing "slowly many days" to Cnidus (ver. 7), and five days till they reach Fair Havens (ver. 8, 9), making at least twenty-five days. Thus they could not have sailed from Cesarea earlier than September 1. Now if we allow about ten days for the time between Paul's defence before Agrippa and his sailing away as prisoner; six or eight days for "the some days" of 25 : 14; and twelve days for "the certain days" of 25 : 13; and seventeen days intervening between the arrival of Festus and trial of Paul (25 : 1-6); making in all about a month and a half, then Festus entered upon the duties of his office as procurator of Judea about the middle of July, A. D. 60.

1-8. **PAUL'S VOYAGE AS FAR AS FAIR HAVENS.** From about September 1 to October 1, A. D. 60. (See chronological note above.)

1. **And when it was determined**, etc.—Festus having decided that Paul should be sent to Cæsar at the first opportunity. (25 : 12, 21 : 26 : 32.) **That we**—Luke and Aristarchus.

(Compare later Col. 4 : 14; Philem. 24.) **Sail**—literally, *sail from*, a nautical term, used by Luke alone of the sacred writers (13 : 4; 14 : 26; 20 : 15) either in simple, or as here in its compound form. **They delivered Paul**—the soldiers who had charge of him by order of Festus, **Certain other prisoners**—"A motley crowd. Like his Lord, Paul was numbered among the transgressors." (ABBOTT.) Josephus speaks of prisoners being sent bound to Rome, showing that it was not uncommon. **A centurion**—a commander of a hundred men, the officer generally appointed to such a charge. (21 : 32; 24 : 23.) **Julius**, like Cornelius, was an illustrious name at Rome. Tacitus writes of Julius Priscus, a centurion, and afterward prefect of the Prætorians, who possibly might be the same as this one. **Of Augustus' band**, or *cohort*. (10 : 1.) An honorable and common title in the Roman military service; and hence difficult to identify here. Josephus (*War*, ii. 12 : 5) speaks of "the troops of Sabaste," or *Augustan*, at Cesarea, about A. D. 51. The Augustan band may have succeeded the Italian band (10 : 1), or possibly was identical with it, being composed of Italian troops. Some suppose that this band was a part of the Imperial guard, amounting at that time to ten thousand men. Julius perhaps was returning from some special mission to Palestine, and the prisoners perhaps were entrusted to him.

2. **A ship of Adramyttium**—probably a coasting vessel returning to Adramyttium, a seaport town of Mysia, in the northeastern part of Asia Minor. As the vessel was to sail **by the coasts**—rather, *unto the places along the coast of Asia*, it was expected that it would fall in with some ship bound for Rome. By **Asia** is meant the province of Asia, of which Ephesus was the capital, including, according to Cicero, Caria and Lycia. The use of

by the coasts of Asia; *one* † Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, being with us. And the next *day* we touched at Sidon. And Julius *courteously entreated Paul, and gave *him* liberty to go ‡ unto his friends to refresh himself. And

when we had launched from thence, we sailed under Cyprus, because the winds † were contrary. And when we had sailed over the sea of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra, *a city of Lycia*.

† Col. 4 : 10.

* ch. 24 : 23 ; 28 : 16.

merchant ships for travel and transportation of prisoners was common in those days. Josephus (*War*, vii. 2 : 1) relates that the Emperor Vespasian, during the siege of Jerusalem, sailed from Alexandria to Rhodes in a merchant ship with three banks of oars, and thence pursued his journey through Greece to the Adriatic Sea, and thence sailing to Italy, he went to Rome by land. **Aristarchus** was a well-known companion of Paul. (See on 19 : 29.) Perhaps he as well as Luke had been more or less with Paul during his imprisonment at Cæsarea.

3. And the next day we touched, or landed at Sidon—the well-known seaport on the coast of Phœnicia, about seventy miles north-east of Cæsarea. It had one of the finest harbors of the East. They probably stopped for the purposes of trade. "From the distance accomplished . . . we must infer that they had a fair, or at least a leading wind, probably westerly, which is the wind which prevails in this part of the Mediterranean." (SMITH'S *Voyage of Paul*, p. 64.) **And Julius courteously, or humanely treated Paul**—he probably had learned at Cæsarea something about Paul's character, imprisonment, and his appeal to Cæsar. Possibly he heard his defence before Agrippa. **And gave him liberty**—permitted *him to go to his friends*, probably his Christian brethren, some of whom may have been old acquaintances. The gospel had been preached all along that coast. (11 : 19.) Paul and Barnabas had traveled through that region on their way from Antioch to the Conference at Jerusalem. Of course, Paul had a military escort. (15 : 3.) **To refresh himself**—or better, *to receive their care*, their hospitality and such attention as his circumstances and bodily health required. The expression is one which a medical writer, and Luke as a physician, would naturally use in

regard to care needed in delicate health. Alford supposes that Paul obtained here some necessary outfit for his voyage.

4. When we had launched—another nautical term characteristic of Luke, for which we have no precisely corresponding word in English. It means *to get under way* or *put to sea*. The expression also **we sailed under Cyprus** is a nautical phrase, meaning according to the best authorities, *under the lee of Cyprus*, that is, protected by that island against the wind, the island being between them and the wind. This is evident from the reason given, **Because the winds were contrary**, from the west, opposing their direct course by the south of Cyprus, to the coast of the province of Asia. So they proceed northward to the east and north of Cyprus. This is confirmed by the next verse, where it is said they sailed through the sea of Cilicia and Pamphylia, which was north of Cyprus. The west wind is the prevailing one in this part of the Mediterranean during the summer and autumn. "In pursuing this route they acted precisely as the most accomplished seaman in the present day would have done under similar circumstances; by standing to the north till they reached the coast of Cilicia they might expect when they did so to be favored by the land wind, which prevails there during the summer months, as well as by the current, which constantly runs to the westward, along the south coast of Asia Minor." (SMITH'S *Voyage*, p. 68.) Mr. Smith mentions a French navigator who took this very route for the same reason as here given. On Cyprus, see on 11 : 19.

5. And when we had sailed over the sea, etc.—more exactly, *And having sailed through the sea along the coasts of Cilicia and Pamphylia*. These two countries were north of Cyprus, and not included in ancient

6 And there the centurion found a ship of Alexandria sailing into Italy; and he put us therein. And when we had sailed

slowly many days, and scarce were come over against Cnidus, the wind not suffering us, we sailed under Crete, over against

Asia. (2:10.) The course of the vessel appears to have been northward toward the coast of Cilicia, where falling in with the current which flows westward along the southern shore of Asia Minor, as far as the Archipelago, it could make fair progress even with unfavorable winds. It now began to reach its destination, stopping at Myra, the first of "the places along the coasts of Asia." (ver. 2.) Lycia was a southwestern district of Asia Minor, and Myra about three miles from the sea, upon rising ground, at the foot of which flowed the Andraicus, a navigable river, with an excellent harbor at its mouth. It still exists with its ancient name, and is remarkable for its fine ruins. The ship had come not far from four hundred miles from Sidon.

6. Here the centurion found a ship of Alexandria bound for Italy, into which he transferred his prisoners and passengers. This ship appears to have been a large merchant vessel carrying wheat, Egypt being at that time one of the granaries of Rome, with two hundred and seventy-six persons also on board. It was probably over five hundred tons burden. See introductory note on ships. On *Alexandria*, see 18:24. Myra was north of Alexandria, and not on the direct route for Italy, but the west or northwest wind would naturally decide the course of the vessel northward, till it reached the coast of Asia Minor, which "is bold and safe, and the elevation of the mountains makes it visible at a great distance. It abounds in harbors, and the sinuosities of the shores and the westerly current would enable them, if the wind was at all off the land, to work to windward, at least as far as Cnidus, where these advantages ceased." (SMITH'S *Voyage*, p. 72.)

7. The distance from Myra to Cnidus, a famous seaport town, on the southwest point of Asia Minor, was one hundred and thirty miles, which, with favorable winds, a sailing vessel could accomplish in a single day. But since they sailed slowly many

days, they must have been retarded by contrary winds. **And scarce**—and having come with difficulty over against Cnidus. Cnidus marked the entrance of the Aegean Sea. Cicero uses similar language in one of his epistles, "Having met with contrary winds and sailed slowly and with difficulty." **The wind not suffering**—this appears to be a nautical expression, used only by Luke, and may mean either, *not suffering us to put in* at Cnidus as they did at Myra, or *not suffering us to proceed further* on their direct course westward toward Italy. But the wind which would not permit them to take shelter in the harbor would prevent them from taking this direct course. "The wind, therefore, would in common language have been termed northwest. Now this is precisely the wind which might have been expected in those seas toward the end of summer. We learn from the sailing directions for the Mediterranean, that throughout the whole of the Mediterranean, but mostly in the eastern half, including the Adriatic and Archipelago, the northwest winds prevail in the summer months, which agrees with Aristotle's account of these winds. According to Pliny, they began in August and blew forty days . . . At Cnidus . . . unless [the vessel] had put into that harbor, and waited for a fair wind, her only course was to run under the lee of Crete, in the direction of Salmone, which is the eastern extremity of that island." (SMITH'S *Voyage*, p. 76.) **Crete**, now called Candia, is a large, mountainous, but fruitful island, bounding the Greek Archipelago on the south. It is one hundred and forty miles long, but comparatively narrow. (See 2:11; Titus 1:5, 12.) The eastern promontory is still called **Salmone**, about one hundred miles, a little west of south of Cnidus. Rounding this cape, they sailed under, that is, on the south of Crete, the island being between them and the wind, and thus sheltering them. (See ver. 4.)

8. **And hardly passing it**—another nautical phrase, meaning *And*

8 Salmone; and hardly passing it, came unto a place which is called The Fair Havens; nigh whereunto was the city of Lasea.

9 Now when much time was spent, and

when sailing was now dangerous, because the fast was now already past, Paul admonished them, and said unto them, Sirs,
¹¹ I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the

¹ Dan. 2 : 30; Amos 3 : 7.

with difficulty coasting along it, that is, along the southern shore of Crete, where the same conditions would largely prevail as along the southern shore of Asia Minor. (Ver. 5, 7.) The northwest wind prevented them from sailing along the northern coast of Crete, where there were two excellent harbors, Souda and Spina Longer. But with the same wind they could sail slowly in a zig-zag course along the southern coast, about one-half the length of the island, to **Fair Havens**, the last harbor before reaching Cape Matala, where the land turns suddenly to the north, beyond which an ancient ship could not go along the coast with northwest winds. *Fair Havens* was discovered by Pococke in the seventeenth century, and is about five miles east of Cape Matala, the most conspicuous headland on the southern coast of Crete. It is not mentioned anywhere in ancient literature, but it still bears the same name. The plural **Havens**, or *Harbors*, accords with the double harbor, there contiguous to each other. It affords a safe shelter from the northwest wind. It was probably the port of **Lasea**. The latter place was discovered by Rev. George Brown in 1856, about five miles east of Fair Havens and close to Cape Leonda. He says: "We found the ruins of two temples. The steps which led up to the one remain, though in a shattered state. Many shafts, and a few capitals of Grecian pillars, all of marble, lie scattered about . . . Some peasants came down to see us from the hills above, and I asked them the name of the place. They said at once, 'Lasea.'" (SMITH'S *Voyage*, p. 268, 4th Ed.) This illustrates the minute accuracy of Luke's reference to places.

9-26. THE VOYAGE CONTINUED; THE SHIP CAUGHT BY A VIOLENT STORM, AND DRIFTS MANY DAYS. From the latter part of September till about November 1, A. D. 60.

9. When much time was spent—at the anchorage of Fair Havens. It was probably getting to be about the middle of October. But some refer *much time* to the whole voyage thus far. **Sailing, or the voyage was now dangerous**—because of the lateness of the season. Navigation was closed among the Romans from about the first of November until about the middle of March. They had hoped to reach Italy that autumn, but unfavorable winds and the approach of the stormy season was now changing their purpose, and they are debating as to the harbor in which to pass the winter. Ancient navigators, in favorable weather, would risk the open sea. For example, Paul sailed from Patara through the open sea to Tyre, on his return from his third missionary journey. (21:1-3.) But this season had been attended with very adverse winds. Clouds and storms might be expected, which were especially dreaded by mariners. (Ver. 20.) The ship already might have been strained. (Ver. 17.) **Because the fast was already past**—the Jewish fast is here used as a note of time, and was on the great Day of Atonement, the 10th day of the seventh month, answering to parts of our September and October. In A. D. 60 it occurred on the 23d of September. **Admonished**—advised them, not to continue their voyage farther, but winter there. Paul could speak from experience. He had traveled much, both by land and sea. Three times he had suffered shipwreck. (2 Cor. 11 : 25.) He could also speak as one under divine guidance, and it was to his advantage that he could afterward refer to this advice. (Ver. 21.)

10. I perceive—indicating careful consideration, and a well-formed judgment, not ignoring, however, the general divine guidance which he enjoyed. Paul, however, does not claim the authority of revelation as in ver. 23, and we should not claim it for him.

- lading and ship, but also of our lives.
 11 Nevertheless the centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship more than those things which were spoken
 12 by Paul. And because the haven was not commodious to winter in, the more

part advised to depart thence also, if by any means they might attain to Phenice, and there to winter; *which is an haven of Crete, and lieth toward the south-west and north-west.*

With hurt—the noun in the Greek properly denotes *insolence*, with special reference to mental injury; but here it has reference to the insolent *violence* of the winds and waves, resulting in *injury* to the ship and their persons. **Much damage, or loss**, growing out of the insolence and violence of the dreaded tempests (see ver. 21), where Paul uses the same words, and this meaning is required. The result vindicated Paul's advice. It was better to remain in a poorer harbor than to run the risk of gales and stormy weathers for a better one.

11. Paul had evidently gained much influence and freedom. But it was natural that the centurion, who seems to have had control of the matter, to give preference to **the master**, the *steersman* or *sailing-master*, corresponding very nearly with our captain, and to the **owner of the ship**, both of whom would be well qualified to judge. But Paul too had had long experience in the "perils of the sea." (2 Cor. 11 : 26.) From this verse and the next it appears that the matter was quite thoroughly discussed. It has been ascertained by late surveys that Fair Havens is quite well protected by islands, and is a fair winter harbor; that considering the suddenness, the frequency, and the violence of northerly winds which would prevent them reaching Phenice, and drive the ship off to sea, the wisdom of Paul's advice would probably be sustained even on nautical grounds. (SMITH, *Voyage*, 85.)

12. **Not commodious, not well situated for passing the winter**, which they were now thinking to do somewhere. Fair Havens affords a protection from north and westerly winds, but is more exposed from other directions. The supply of provisions would also be taken into account. **The more part advised**—which indicates a general consultation. **To depart, etc.**—a nautical expression, *to put to sea from thence also*, as they had from

other places, *if by any means they might reach Phenice*. This shows that they regarded the voyage as perilous, but the reaching of an excellent harbor worthy of a hazardous effort. Ptolemy mentions a town by the name of *Phœnicæ* and also a port, and Strabo mentions a harbor of this name on the south of Crete at the narrowest part of the island. With this agrees well the harbor of Lutro about forty miles west of Fair Havens; and also a wide bay just west of Lutro and adjoining it, which is still known by the name of Phenika. The latter opens somewhat westward and accords quite well with the description, **lieth toward**, rather, *looking toward* or *facing the southwest and northwest*. This would be also a safe harbor from the northerly and easterly winds, and especially the northeast wind, which proved so disastrous to their ship. (Ver. 14.) This is substantially the view of Dr. Hackett, Humphrey, Wordsworth, and Gloag. But Mr. Smith preferred Lutro as the harbor intended, because it is the best harbor on the southern coast of Crete, having an island in front which shelters it, and two entrances, one looking to the northeast and the other to the southeast. But this is exactly opposite of the description here, *looking toward the southwest and northwest*. Various explanations have been proposed. Mr. Smith understands it of the direction toward which the wind blows, the *southwest* wind blowing toward the *northeast*, etc. Alford agrees with this, *looking down the wind*. Dr. Howson supposes that the point of view is from the sea, sailors speaking from their own point of view, and thus the harbor, viewed from the water on approaching, looks toward the land which encloses it in the direction of "southwest and northwest." Others suppose that as the ship did not reach the harbor, Luke may only state the common opinion or report in regard to Phenice. Doubtless one of these harbors, Phenika or Lutro, is

13 And when the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained *their* purpose, *loosing thence*, they sailed close 14 by Crete. But not long after there arose

meant. On philological grounds Phenika answers best to the descriptions. The town also may have had two ports. Moreover, upheavals and submergences have been frequent in Crete, and thus changes may have occurred in the coast lines of both of these harbors.

13. A change at length occurs, *a south wind blowing gently, and thinking that they had obtained their purpose* of removing to Phenice, **loosing**, rather, *they weighed anchor*, that is, raised up the anchors from the bottom of the sea. Although the south wind was often treacherous, yet the voyage could be accomplished in three or four hours, and their earnest desire to do it helped their thought. As it was only about four miles a little south of west to Cape Matala, and about thirty-four miles northwest thence to Port Phenice, it was easy for them to think that they had attained their purpose. Mr. Smith observes that a ship which could not lie nearer to the wind than seven points would just weather Cape Matala, and that this shows the force and propriety of the expression, **They sailed close**, or *closer* by Crete, than usual, or than they had done before. As a matter of special precaution they may have *coasted closely along Crete* after passing around the cape; yet with no special anxiety, for the boat was towing behind. (Ver. 16.)

14. But their hopes are soon and suddenly blasted. **Not long after**. How long we know not; but probably soon after rounding Cape Matala. Violent northerly gales after gentle southerly winds are not unfrequent on that coast. Captain Spratt writes: "After starting from Fair Havens for Messara Bay, we left with a *light southerly wind* and a clear sky . . . until we rounded the cape (Matala) to haul up for the head of the bay. Then we saw Mount Ida covered in a dense cloud, and met a strong northerly breeze—one of those summer gales so frequent in the Levant, but which in general are accompanied by terrific gusts from those high mountains, the wind blowing direct from

against it a tempestuous wind, called 15 Euroclydon. And when the ship was caught, and could not bear up into the 16 wind, we let *her* drive. And running

Mount Ida." Messrs. Tennent and Brown speak of their vessel near Port Phenice being becalmed with light airs from the south and southeast, and of a heavy squall blowing suddenly upon it. And Captain J. Stewart in his remarks on the Archipelago says of southerly winds, "they almost invariably shift to a violent northerly wind." (SMITH, *Voyage*, pp. 100, 102.) **There arose**, rather, *There beat down against it*, not the island, but the ship, which was large and prominent in Luke's mind. (Ver. 11.) That the wind was not against Crete, but from its mountains, is evident from the fact that the ship was driven away from Crete toward Claudia. (Ver. 16.) Or it may be translated as a nautical phrase, according to the Revised Version, *There beat down from it*, from Crete, the wind that bore them seaward. **A tempestuous wind**—literally, *a typhonic wind*, an expression used of terrific and whirling blasts, and applied to hurricanes and whirlwinds. This wind Luke specifies as **the Euroclydon**, rather, according to the highest critical authorities *the Euracylon*, which, popularly speaking, is the northeast, or more strictly, the east-northeast wind. Mr. Smith has shown that this is just the wind that would have driven the ship to Claudia (ver. 16), and from thence into the quicksands of the African Syrtis. (Ver. 17.) The narrative that follows shows that the same wind continued till they reached Malta. (SMITH, *Voyage*, pp. 100-3, 272.)

15. **The ship was caught**—*being seized by force*, whirled from its course, and carried away. A strong expression. **Could not bear up**, etc.—*could not face the wind*, a nautical expression, derived perhaps from painting eyes on each side of the prow of a ship. **We let her drive**—rather, *giving up to it*, that is, to the wind. In the language of seamen, they were forced to *scud* before the wind toward the southwest. See preceding verse.

16. **And running under a certain small island**—under the lee of it, so as to be sheltered by it from the wind.

under a certain island which is called Claudia, we had much work to come by 17 the boat: which when they had taken up,

they used helps, undergirding the ship; and, fearing lest they should fall into the quicksands, strake sail, and so were

Luke shows here and elsewhere a nice discrimination in the use of sea phrases. In this chapter he uses no less than nine different verbs, marking in some way the progression of the ship, but each one indicating some distinguishing circumstance connected with the ship at the time. Thus: "Sailing" toward (ver. 3); or with (ver. 24); "to sail away" or "set sail" (ver. 1); "to sail under" to the leeward of (ver. 4, 7); "to sail across" (ver. 5); "sailing slowly" (ver. 7); "coasting along" (ver. 8, 13); "borne" or "driven along" (ver. 15); "running under," past, and to the leeward of (ver. 16); "driven through," to and fro. (ver. 27.) Such careful use of words shows that Luke was an eye and ear-witness. **Clauda**, or *Cauda*; the modern *Gozzo*, about twenty-three miles southwest of that part of Crete, where the wind caught the ship. (See on ver. 14.) When caught it was sailing northwestward with her right side toward the land. So the wind came upon her side, and so she was driven. She must have passed the east end of Claudia, for there are rocks and a dangerous reef to the northwest of it. Passing to the south of the island, she came into more quiet waters, where preparations would be made for riding out the gale. In all this we see a singular and guiding Providence. "Leaving Alexandria in January, 1859, I made a remark to the captain upon the smiling character of the weather. 'The south wind blew softly,' the sky was blue, the sea like glass. 'Yes,' replied the captain, 'very pleasant as long as it lasts.' It did not last long; when we sighted Crete, Euraqualo was blowing rather stiffly. As we neared Crete the sea became somewhat rolling and rough. It was getting dark and I went below. While reading I perceived that we were suddenly in smooth water. Going upon deck I found the captain, who, pointing to the starboard (right hand) side of the ship, said, 'There is that island.' We were in the position of Paul, when 'running under a certain island which is called Claudia, they had much work to come by the boat.' Had

our machinery broken down, or the ship become disabled, we should have drifted toward Malta, as did the ship which carried Paul." (H. CARLISLE in *Smith's Voyage*, p. 16.) **We had much work to come by the boat**—rather, *we were able with difficulty to become masters of the boat*, to get possession of it and secure it. The row boat had been towed behind the ship. There was danger that it would be washed away. It was important to haul it on deck, as it might be of use in case of shipwreck. The difficulty experienced in securing it probably arose, partly from the waters being somewhat agitated, but largely from the boat being nearly filled with water.

17. Which when they had taken up—that is, they raised the boat on deck. In ancient ships the boats were not fastened round about the vessel, but taken along in tow in pleasant weather, and on deck in stormy weather. **They used helps.** The imperfection of the build and the peculiarities of the rig of ancient ships rendered them more liable than modern vessels to leakage and foundering. Hence they took with them appliances, which they called *helps*, such as ropes and chains which they used in **undergirding the ship**, passing them under and around the ship at right angles to its length, and thus bound tight round the middle. By this means they would prevent the timbers from starting, and strengthen the ship against the force of the tempest. Ptolemy's great ship carried twelve of these undergirders. Several allusions to this practice are found in classical writers. It is sometimes resorted to in modern times, and is called *frapping*. **Fearing lest they should fall, or be cast away upon the quicksands**—or the *Syrtis*, the name of two parts of the sea on the African coast, full of shallows and sandbanks, and hence destructive to ships. The eastern one was called *Syrtis Minor*; the western, *Syrtis Major*, now the gulf of Sidra. They were the terror of ancient mariners. Into the latter the northwest wind would have driven the ship from

18 driven. And we being ^mexceedingly tossed with a tempest, the next day they
19 lightened the ship; and the third day ⁿwe cast out with our own hands the tackling

20 of the ship. And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away.

^m Ps. 107 : 27.

ⁿ Jonah 1 : 5.

Clauda, had not the sails, the rudders, and the ship been arranged for drifting westward. They **strake sail**—rather, *they lowered the sail or the gear*. The noun is a very general one, and seems to have been applied by seamen to the rigging and apparatus of a ship. They lowered the top-sails, the large square sail, and other tackle used in fair weather, and whatever could be dispensed with. "In a storm with a contrary wind or on a lee-shore, a ship is obliged to lie to under a very low sail; some sail is absolutely necessary to keep the ship steady, otherwise she would pitch about like a cork, and roll so deep as to strain and work herself to pieces." (*Encyc. Brit. Art. Seaman-ship. Smith, Voyage*, p. 114.) Mr. Smith has shown that to avoid the Syrtis the sailors must have had the ship headed to the north with the right side to the wind, the storm-sail and rudders arranged, and the head of the vessel kept as near the wind as possible. (SMITH, *Voyage*, p. 114.) **And so were driven**—hoping to outride the gale. Experienced navigators say that under such circumstances a ship would drift west by north, at the rate of thirty-six miles in twenty-four hours. Thirteen days and a fraction of such drifting would bring the ship to that part of Malta, where tradition marks the scene of the shipwreck. Thus remarkably do the most careful calculations tally with the Scripture narrative.

18. **And we being exceedingly**, or *violently*, *tossed with a tempest*—the storm continuing and increasing. **The next day**—after undergirding the ship, getting her ready for the storm, **they lightened the ship**—*they made a throwing overboard*, a nautical phrase different from that in ver. 38, whereby sailors lighten a ship in a storm to prevent her from sinking. Perhaps the ship had sprung a leak, and the water was gaining in the hold. Compare a similar scene in Jonah 1 : 5. What they cast forth is not told. Prob-

ably the least valuable, the most bulky, and the most accessible portions of their cargo. The bulk of their merchandise appears to have been of wheat, and this they kept to the last. (Ver. 38.)

19. The danger becomes more and more imminent; and they are obliged to lighten the ship still more. This confirms the supposition that the ship was suffering serious injury from the storm. The loss of ancient ships was principally from leaks. Josephus (*Life 3*) relates that on his voyage to Italy the ship sank in the Adriatic Sea, in consequence of damage sustained during a storm. Paul seems to have suffered before this from a like cause when he was "a day and a night in the deep," doubtless floating on fragments of the wreck. **We cast out with our own hands**—or, with four of the oldest manuscripts, *They cast out with their own hands*. That would be rather the work of the sailors, unless the case was exceedingly urgent, or that which was cast over very large. **The tackling**—a word near akin to that in ver. 17 rendered "sail" or "gear," and means *apparatus, equipment, furniture*. Some apply it to tables, beds, chests, etc. Nautical interpreters understand it of heavy portions of the rigging, such as the mainyard. "I suppose the mainyard is meant; an immense spar, probably as long as the ship, which would require the united efforts of passengers and crew to launch it overboard. The relief which a ship would experience by this, would be of the same kind as in a modern ship when the guns are thrown overboard." (SMITH'S *Voyage*, p. 116.)

20. Fear is followed by despair of saving the ship and their lives. **Many days**—*several*—how many is not told. Probably a week and more since leaving Clauda. As they did not have the compass, they were dependent upon the sun and the position and the rising and setting of different stars to guide their course. But these not *appearing*, they

21 But after long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, *Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have*
 22 *gained this harm and loss. And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: ° for there shall be no loss of any man's life among*

23 *you, but of the ship.* ¶ For there stood by me this night the angel of God,
 24 *whose I am, and ° whom I serve, saying, ° Fear not, Paul: ° thou must be brought before Cæsar: and, lo, ° God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.*

° ver. 44. ¶ ch. 23 : 11; Heb. 1 : 14. ° Dan. 6 : 16; Rom. 1 : 9; 2 Tim. 1 : 3. ° Isa. 44 : 21. ° ch. 23 : 11. ° Gen. 19 : 21, 29.

could not know whither they were going or what dangers they were approaching. **No small tempest lay on us**—that is, *a great one*. Luke often thus speaks. (12 : 18; 15 : 2; 19 : 23.) **All hope—**of being saved from shipwreck and death *was entirely taken away*. It is evident that the condition of the ship was becoming more critical. They could not tell which way lay the nearest land, in order to run her ashore. Hence it appears that they must soon founder at sea and be lost.

21. But after long or much abstinence—not entire, but a high degree and long continued. This was owing, not to a religious fast, nor to a scarcity of provisions (ver. 38), but to the impossibility of cooking and having regular meals, to the constant demands made upon them for labor, and to the anxiety and excitements which took away their appetite, or made it impossible to eat. It was at this time of great extremity and of human despair, that **Paul stood forth in the midst of them** with divine encouragement. They were now prepared to hear from him, first words of reminder and of gentle censure, and then words of exhortation and encouragement. **And to have gained this harm and loss**—better, *And have escaped this violence and loss* to their persons and property. (See on ver. 10.) Paul's object in recalling his former advice was not to reproach them, but rather to inspire confidence in what he was about to say.

22. And, though you did not take my advice then, now I exhort you to be of good cheer—my apprehensions of danger and loss, and your expectation of certain destruction will not be realized; **for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but only of the ship**. Notice that in the former advice (ver. 10) Paul

utters his well-formed judgment and convictions; in this he speaks with the confidence and authority of a revelation.

23. The reason of his cheering exhortation and confident prediction. **For there stood by me**, not in a dream or a vision (16 : 7), but actually near me and seen by me. (1 : 10.) **This night**—just passed, as the words were probably uttered in the morning. **The angel**, etc.—rather, *an angel of the God*. The ministry of angels is made prominent in the Acts. (1 : 10; 10 : 3; 12 : 7.) In speaking to heathen who had their own gods, Paul would naturally specify *the God* to whom he referred. But he sustained a different relation to his God from that which they would acknowledge toward theirs: **Whose I am**, to whom I belong, **and whom I serve**, or *to whom also I offer worship*. Worship refers especially to external acts, but in Paul's case included also the internal homage of the heart. It also indicates his habitual state of mind. (24 : 14.) The expression is characteristic of Paul. (Rom. 1 : 9; 2 Tim. 1 : 3.) It here implies that they had seen him at worship, and knew him as a worshiper of God. Doubtless, too, this revelation had come in answer to prayer.

24. Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Cæsar—it is implied that Paul had experienced fear and anxiety. (Ver. 10, 22. See 18 : 9.) His faith was tested; for the Lord had promised that he should see Rome. (23 : 11.) Doubtless he believed the promise, though the ship and the rest should perish. **And lo, God hath given, or granted, thee all them that sail with thee**—they were graciously preserved for his sake. It would seem that Paul had prayed for himself, pleading the Lord's promise (23 : 11), and for all that were with him.

25 Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: "for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was
 26 told me. Howbeit ^{*} we must be cast upon a certain island.
 27 But when the fourteenth night was

come, as we were driven up and down in Adria, about midnight, the shipmen deemed that they drew near to some
 28 country; and sounded, and found *it* twenty fathoms: and when they had gone

^u Num. 23 : 19 ; Luke 1 : 45 ; Rom. 4 : 20, 21 ; 2 Tim. 1 : 12. ^{*} ch. 28^u : 1.

Compare Philem. 22 and Abraham's intercessory prayer for Sodom, Gen. 18 : 23-32. "Many bad men are preserved with a few godly men, more easily, than one godly man perishes with many guilty. The world is like the ship." (BENGEL.)

25. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: For I believe God—I have this sure ground of confidence.

26. Paul tells them how they should be saved. We shall all indeed escape, *but we must be cast upon a certain island.* The name of the island had not been revealed to Paul. (28 : 1.)

27-44. THE DISCOVERY OF LAND AND THE SHIPWRECK. About November 1, A. D. 60.

27. When the fourteenth day was come—from the time of their leaving Fair Havens. **As we were driven up and down**, literally, *through Adria, about to and fro.* A gale of such length is by no means unknown in those seas. "Aristides (the orator) encounters a gale in the Ægean Sea, and is driven through it for fourteen days and nights. Professor Newman met with a continuous easterly gale on the coast of Cyprus in December, 1830." He was bound for Syria, but was kept "wind bound for days" in the port of the ancient Salamis; and "it was finally the first of January when he reached the Syrian coast." (SMITH, *Voyage*, p. 149.) **In Adria** means the Sea of Adria, which denoted much more than the present Gulf of Venice, embracing the central basin of the Mediterranean between Sicily and Greece, and by some extended as far as the coast of Africa. To this effect is the testimony of Ptolemy, Pausanias, and the later Greek and Roman writers. (SMITH, *Voyage*, pp. 283-4.) The Sea of Adria appears here to be spoken of as extending as far south as Malta and its vicinity.

About midnight the shipmen deemed—or supposed that some coun-

try was nearing them. Luke uses the graphic language of seamen, to whom the ship is the principal object, while the land rises and sinks, nears and recedes. But why did they suppose? Not by the sense of smell, as some interpreters have suggested, for the wind was blowing not from the land, but toward the land. Their knowledge of the sea would enable them to judge from a change of currents or from the sound and dashing of waves against the beach. Assuming that St. Paul's Bay on the north side of Malta is the actual scene of the shipwreck, Mr. Smith says (p. 121): "No ship can enter it from the east without passing within a quarter of a mile of the point of Koura; but before reaching it the land is too low and too far from the track of the ship driven from the eastward, to be seen in a dark night. When she does come within this distance, it is impossible to avoid observing the breakers; for with north-easterly gales the sea breaks upon it with such violence that Admiral Smyth, in his view of the headland, has made the breakers its distinctive character." Mr. Smith personally visited the point of Koura and verified these facts. He also learned of the shipwreck of the frigate "Lively" on the night of August 10, 1810, at this very spot. The quartermaster saw 'the curl of the sea' upon the rocks at the point of Koura, about a quarter of a mile off. The man at the lead sounded and found *twenty-five fathoms of water.* (See next verse.) By some mishap they failed to manage the vessel, and falling broadside upon the rocks, and a gale coming on, she went to pieces. (SMITH, *Voyage*, p. 123.) This, too, was just the place whither the ship would drift in about thirteen days from Clauda. (See note at end of ver. 17.)

28. Sounded—threw out the lead and line in order to ascertain the depth

a little further, they sounded again, and 29 found it fifteen fathoms. Then fearing lest they should have fallen upon rocks, they cast four anchors out of the stern, and wished for the day.

30 And as the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship, when they had let down the boat into the sea, under colour as though they would have cast anchors out of the foreship, Paul said to the

of water. **Twenty fathoms.** The ancient fathom was about the same as the modern, six feet. Soon after they sounded again and found **fifteen fathoms**—showing that they were nearing the shore. Their only safety in the dark was to anchor (next verse). These soundings correspond with those in St. Paul's Bay, supposing the ship to be drifting in a westerly direction. At the supposed rate of the ship's movement (a mile and a half an hour) it would have taken about a half hour between the twenty and the fifteen-fathom depth, which would give time to prepare for anchoring. (SMITH, *Voyage*, p. 131.)

29. Then fearing lest we should have fallen upon rocky places: which perhaps they could dimly see. "The fifteen-fathom depth is as nearly as possible a quarter of a mile from the shore, which is here girt with mural precipices, and upon which the sea must have been breaking with great violence." (SMITH, *Voyage*, p. 132.) A few minutes more and they are wrecked. Hence the necessity of anchoring at once; and of a hard bottom, where the anchors will hold. Now Mr. Smith quotes from the sailing directions regarding the anchorage in St. Paul's Bay: "It is, notwithstanding, safe for small ships, the ground being very good; and while the cables hold there is no danger, *as the anchors will never start.*" **They cast four anchors**—and they had others, perhaps as many more. (Ver. 30.) Ancient ships had smaller, but more anchors than modern vessels. Cæsar speaks of one having four. Athenæus mentions one of eight. The anchors seen on ancient coins were similar in form to those of modern times. **Out of the stern**—the ancients, like the moderns, generally anchored from the bow, but often from the stern, by passing the cable of the anchors through the rudder holes. In order to do this the two rudders were raised out of the water and fastened. Mr. Smith has given a copy of

a stern of a ship, illustrating this, from a sculpture from the Herculaneum, contemporary with the Apostle Paul. Occasionally this has been done in modern times. Thus Lord Nelson anchored by the stern at the battle of Copenhagen in 1801, and Lord Exmouth at the battle of Algiers in 1816. The reasons for thus anchoring Paul's ship were: To stop its progress as soon as possible. Had they anchored from the bow, the ship might have swung around upon shoals or rocks. Besides, the head of the vessel being toward the land, when the morning came, they would be prepared to run her ashore, if possible. By simply cutting away the anchors, lowering the rudders and raising the foresail, which could be done at once, the vessel would be in readiness to run into any part of the shore which afforded them any prospect of safety. **Wished for the day**—anxious lest the ship, being in a precarious state, might go down at her anchors, or the morning coming the coast might afford no beach upon which they could land in safety.

30. This anxiety about their situation and prospects led the **shipmen**, or *sailors* very naturally, but selfishly, to attempt to save their own lives by *lowering* the row **boat**, which had been hoisted on deck soon after the storm began. (Ver. 16). **Were about**—or, *were seeking, to flee*. **Under colour, as though, etc.** They act as if about to **cast anchors**, from the *foreship as well as from the stern*. This must appear plausible to landsmen, but not to seamen. Hence Mr. Smith supposes that the officers of the ship were parties to this unworthy attempt. This accords with the statement in the next verse that the centurion and soldiers arrested it.

31. Paul exhibits keen perception in detecting their design and tact in saying nothing to the sailors, but addressing the centurion. **Except these abide in the ship ye cannot be saved.** God had promised Paul the

31 centurion and to the soldiers, ¶ Except
32 these abide in the ship, ye cannot be
saved. Then the soldiers cut off the ropes
of the boat, and let her fall off.

33 And while the day was coming on, Paul
besought *them* all to take meat, saying,
This day is the fourteenth day that ye
have tarried and continued fasting,
34 having taken nothing. Wherefore I
pray you to take *some* meat: for this is

for your health: for there shall not an
hair fall from the head of any of you.
35 And when he had thus spoken, he took
bread, and ²gave thanks to God in pres-
ence of them all: and when he had broken
36 *it* he began to eat. ³Then were they all
of good cheer, and they also took *some*
37 meat. And we were in all in the ship two
hundred threescore and sixteen souls.

* Matt. 15 : 36; Mark 8 : 6; John 6 : 11; 1 Cor. 10 : 30, 31; 1 Tim. 4 : 3, 4.
 † 2 Cor. 1 : 4.

safety of all, yet every human effort was to be made. The skill of the sailors, in guiding the ship ashore, and in reaching the land, was needed to carry out the will of God. The ignorance and unskillfulness of the soldiers and passengers might result disastrously.

32. With military promptness the soldiers **cut off the ropes of the boat** by which it was fastened to the ship and **let her fall off** into the sea, where she drifts into the darkness and to destruction. Their willingness to sacrifice the boat shows that Paul had gained a wonderful power over them.

33. While the day was coming on. The meaning is, During the interval till the break of day, when it would be light enough to see what is best to be done. For the fourth time Paul appears as the wise counsellor of the ship. He sees that they must be prepared in strength and spirits for the work of escaping from the ship; and he beseeches them **all to take food.** On the fourteenth day, see on ver. 27. **Having taken nothing—**no regular food; as it were nothing. The language is popular and strong, but natural, and would be understood by those whom he addressed. (See on ver. 21.)

34. Wherefore, in view of your long fasting and your consequent weakness and exhaustion, I entreat you to take food. A positive reason is added, **for this is for your health, rather, for your safety.** In the dangers and work before them *nourishment* would enable them to do more toward their own preservation. An encouraging assurance of ultimate escape is also given. **There shall not a hair fall from the head of any of you.** A strong proverbial expression, denoting com-

plete deliverance. (1 Sam. 14:45; 1 Kings 1:52; Luke 21:18.)

35. Gave thanks to God. Some entertain the fanciful idea that this was regarded by the Christians present as a love feast, or even the commemoration of the Lord's Supper. But of this there is not the slightest hint, nor the least evidence. Paul was simply acting as a Christian, returning thanks according to his custom. (Rom. 14: 6; 1 Cor. 10: 30; 14: 17; 1 Thess. 5: 18.) Such language was used of ordinary meals. (Luke 24: 30; John 6: 11, 23.) **In presence of them all**—acknowledging God whom he served (ver. 23) before all the heathen soldiers and mariners. In breaking the bread and eating he began a regular meal, whether confined to bread alone, or not, in contrast with their previous scanty fare. (Ver. 21.)

36. Then were they all of good cheer—inspired by his example and his devout trustfulness and thankfulness. **They also took some meat**—rather, *took food*, partook of a regular meal. “When we reflect who were included in these *all*—the soldiers and their centurions, the sailors and passengers of various nations and dispositions, it shows remarkably the influence acquired by Paul over all who sailed with him.” (ALFORD.)

37. Two hundred three score and sixteen souls. The number, two hundred and seventy-six, was large, but a vessel which had four anchors was also large. (Ver. 29.) The number on board at this time was not unusual for an Alexandrian merchant ship of good size. Josephus, about this time, was wrecked in the Adriatic with a shipload of six hundred. (JOSEPHUS, *Life*, § 3.) How many were prisoners, soldiers, passengers, we

38 And when they had eaten enough, ^b they lightened the ship, and cast out the wheat into the sea.

39 And when it was day, they knew not the land: but they discovered a certain creek with a shore, into the which they

were minded, if it were possible, to thrust 40 in the ship. And when they had taken up the anchors, they committed *themselves* unto the sea, and loosed the rudder bands, and hoisted up the mainsail to the

^b ver. 18, 19.

have not the means of ascertaining. The reason for numbering was, that in coming ashore the captain might know of the crew and passengers, and the centurion of the prisoners and soldiers, that none were lost or missing. It was very natural to state the number at this point of the narrative.

38. They lightened the ship—so as the more easily to approach the shore. Besides, having been for many days drifting sideways (see on ver. 17), it is probable that the wheat had shifted largely to the left side; and it was necessary to cast it out and right the ship again so as to steer her accurately to the shore. **Cast out the wheat**—the principal cargo, and reserved to the last. Merchant vessels were accustomed to carry wheat from Egypt to Italy, and the mere mention of this vessel's cargo at this point affords one of many undesigned coincidences in the book of the Acts.

39. They knew not, did not recognize, **the land** before them. Yet Melita was a well-known island, and its excellent harbor at Valetta was familiar to seamen. But they had already passed beyond that harbor in the night and were several miles north of it. They were in a less familiar part of the coast, which had no marked features about it, while the driving rain and mists would somewhat obstruct their view. **But they discovered a certain creek, inlet, or bay with a shore**, literally, *with a beach*, a smooth, sandy shore suited for landing, or for running the ship aground. St. Paul's Bay is on the northeast part of the island, and is formed by the main land on the south and the little island of Salmonetta on the north, and opens toward the east. It is two miles long from east to west, and one mile broad at the entrance. The shore is skirted with rocks and precipices except in two places where there are inlets, and one of which, the Mestara Valley,

has a beach. Mr. Smith, however, is inclined to choose the other inlet, which no longer has a beach, but which geologists know must have had one, from the dip of the beds and the form of the land. His chief reason for preferring this inlet is its proximity to what Luke calls "a place of two seas," or "where two seas met." (Ver. 41. See on ver. 27.) (SMITH'S *Voyage*, p. 140-3.) All this agrees strikingly with Luke's account. **Into the which**—upon *which beach they were minded*, were determined, if they could, to drive the ship. A few ancient authorities read, *If they could bring the ship safe to shore*.

40. They proceed at once to carry out their determination. And when they had taken up the anchors. Rather, *Cutting off the anchors*—that is, cutting the ropes that connected them with the ship. **They committed themselves unto the sea**—rather, *they left them, the anchors, to the sea*. They were no longer needed, and would only add weight to the ship. **And loosed the rudder bands.** See prefatory note on "Ships." The two rudders had been raised out of the water when the anchors had been cast out from the stern. (Ver. 29.) The rudders were now needed to steer the ship toward the beach; the anchor ropes might have been an impediment to their free use; and hence their cutting away was quite necessary. **Hoisted the mainsail**—rather, *foresail*. This noun is found only here among ancient Greek writers, and has been applied to almost every sail which a vessel carries. Mr. Smith, however, has shown pretty clearly that the foresail is meant. It was the best possible sail to be used under the circumstances, and just what a sailor would have *hoisted to the wind* in order to make toward the beach. In a gale in Crimea, in November, 1854, the captain of the ship, the *Lord Raglan*, beached her; the foresail

41 wind, and made toward shore. And falling into a place where two seas met, they

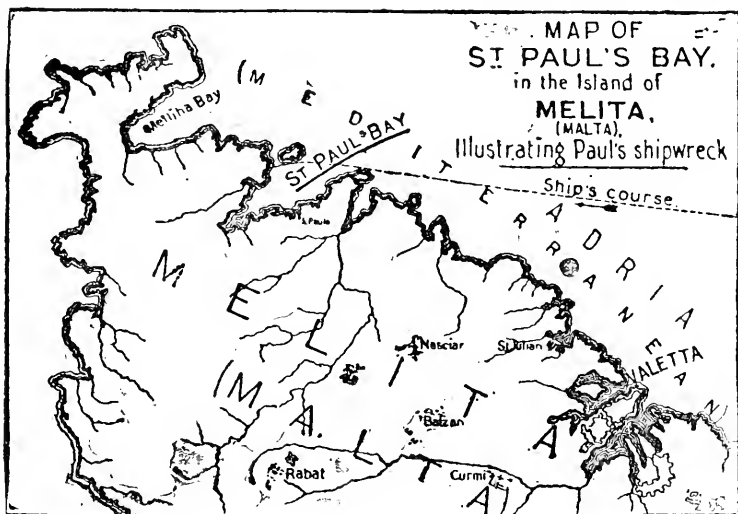
ran the ship aground; and the forepart stuck fast, and remained unmovable, but

• 2 Cor. 11 : 25.

only was used, and proved of great advantage. (SMITH, *Voyage*, p. 141.)

41. And—rather, *But*, introducing some circumstances that defeated the intention of the sailors. *But falling into a place where two seas met*—where opposite currents met, and spent their force upon the stern of the vessel. Or, according to Mr. Smith, this phrase

tinuous; but as they approach the beach, they could see the strait, and soon after the current, between the mainland and the island. This current meets the opposing sea, where, by its deposits, a shoal and a bank of clay and sand have been formed. Into this bank the ship might very likely be driven, and just at this point where the current was



may be referred to the channel, not more than a hundred yards wide between the small island Salmonetta and Malta, which would appear to the sailors nearing the beach as connecting the sea inside the bay and the sea outside. He supposes the shipwreck to have occurred near this channel, and a little north of the traditional site. (See on ver. 39.) The features of the locality harmonize with either view. To the sailors, from the supposed position of the ship, when at anchor, the island Salmonetta and the Maltese coast appeared as though the land were all con-

broken by the opposing sea. So they reach not the beach as they hoped, but are compelled to swim for their lives. Or, see quotation from Mr. Smith below. **The forepart—or foreship (ver. 30) struck, striking fast—remained unmovable.** "This is a remarkable circumstance, which but for the peculiar nature of the bottom of St. Paul's Bay, it would be difficult to account for. The rocks of Malta disintegrate into extremely minute particles of sand and clay, which, when acted upon by the currents, or by the surface agitation, form a deposit of tenacious clay; whilst

the hinder part was broken with the
42 violence of the waves. And the soldiers'
counsel was to kill the prisoners, lest any
of them should swim out, and escape.
43 But the centurion, ^a willing to save Paul,
kept them from *their* purpose; and com-

manded that they which could swim
should cast *themselves* first into the sea, and
44 get to land; and the rest, some on boards,
and some on *broken pieces* of the ship.
And so it came to pass, ^e that they es-
caped all safe to land.

^a Prov. 16 : 7.

^e ver. 22, 24.

in still water, where these currents do not act, mud is found; but it is only in the creeks where there are no currents, and at such a depth as to be undisturbed by the waves, that the mud occurs. In Admiral Smyth's chart of the bay, the nearest soundings of the mud indicate a depth of about three fathoms, which is about what a large ship will draw. A ship, therefore, impelled by the force of a gale into a creek with such a bottom would strike into mud, graduating into tenacious clay into which the forepart would fix itself, and be held fast, whilst the stern was exposed to the force of the waves." (SMITH, *Voyage*, p. 143-4.) **But the hinder part was broken**, more exactly, *was breaking to pieces by the violence of the waves*. Some ancient authorities omit *of the waves*, but the meaning is the same. The ship was without doubt badly strained, leaky, and much damaged by the gale. (Ver. 18.) The driving wind would increase the violence of the currents. John Kitto, who was at Malta for a time, says of the small island Salmonetta: "The currents and shoals around which are particularly dangerous in stormy weather." (*Alexander's Kitto's Encyclopedia*.)

42. And the soldier's counsel, or plan was to kill the prisoners. By the Roman law they were responsible with their own lives for the prisoners under their charge. We get a glimpse of the stern fidelity and the cruelty of the Roman military system. We also have illustrations of it in 12 : 19 ; 16 : 27-29.

43. But the centurion willing, rather, wishing to save Paul—had it not been for Paul, the other prisoners would probably have been killed. Thus three times is he the means of preserving life. (Ver. 24, 31, 43.) **Commanded that they which could swim, etc.**—these getting first to land would en-

courage, help, and succor others who were floating on planks and spars. Paul, who had been thrice shipwrecked (2 Cor. 11 : 25), was doubtless one of the swimmers and efficient helpers.

44. And the rest, who could not swim, some on boards, or planks, and some on broken pieces, or parts of the ship. The loose articles and furniture of the vessel had probably been thrown overboard before this. So that pieces of the stranded vessel, broken off by the waves or by hand, are doubtless meant. In this description we see that perfect discipline was maintained on board; which was all important, both to prevent confusion and to encourage the fearful. **They escaped all**—more exactly, *They all got through safe to the land*. There seems to be an allusion to the promise in ver. 24, 25, which was thus remarkably fulfilled.

PRACTICAL REMARKS.

1. This chapter presents strong historic evidence of the truth of Christianity. The extreme accuracy of Luke proves his trustworthiness as a writer of both the Acts and his Gospel; and hence of the things therein contained. (Ver. 4, 5, 8, 12, 14-16; Luke 1 : 1-4.)

2. It would seem to have been God's will that this remarkable chapter should have been penned for such times as ours, to meet the evidential demands of criticism, and the tests of skepticism. (John 20 : 31; Esth. 4 : 14.)

3. This chapter affords a striking illustration of the power and value of Christian trustfulness. (Ver. 22-25; 34-36; Ps. 91.)

4. This chapter illustrates the influence and salutary effect of a truly consecrated Christian man. (Ver. 10, 21, 31, 33, 43; Prov. 16 : 7.)

5. This chapter exhibits God's providential care over his people. (Ver. 1, 3, 6, 21-25, 32; Gen. 50 : 19, 20.)

6. The Christian's path is often determined by wicked men, who thus fulfill the purposes of God. Thus Paul's long journey to Rome, and his residence there as a preacher, were provided for without expense to him. (Ver. 1; 3: 17, 18; Ps. 37: 23, 24.)

7. God overrules the hearts of men for the good of his cause and his children. (Ver. 3, 43; Ezek. 21: 27.)

8. "Even when the route is circuitous and the winds unfavorable, God conducts his servants to the desired port." (Ver. 4, 5; Ps. 107: 7.)

9. In giving advice without intruding and in patiently bearing its rejection, Paul presents an example of the dignity becoming a Christian. (Ver. 9-11; 1 Cor. 16: 13.)

10. The voice of the people is not the voice of God. Majorities are often on the wrong side. (Ver. 12; Exod. 23: 2.)

11. We must beware how we trust to appearances, or depend on the temporal. (Ver. 13, 14; Prov. 27: 1.)

12. What will not a man give for his life? Yet the perishing soul often gathers more and more of that which is already sinking him. (Ver. 18, 19; Job. 2: 4; Luke 12: 19-21.)

13. Happy he who on the voyage of life is ready to give up everything to reach the heavenly land. (Ver. 18, 19, 38, 44; Matt. 19: 29.)

14. Paul was a remarkable example of becoming all things to all men. Among seamen he showed himself not a bad seaman. (Ver. 10, 21; 1 Cor. 9: 20-23.)

15. Men need to be taught their own helplessness, and their entire dependence on God; and then will they be ready to hear, and accept his help. (Ver. 20, 21; Ps. 107: 23-32.)

16. The servant of God can well be of good cheer, resting on the promise of God, and knowing his revealed will. (Ver. 22; 28: 11; Heb. 13: 5, 6.)

17. We should recognize and acknowledge God's ownership in us, by our consecration to him, and by openly confessing him. (Ver. 23; 1 Cor. 6: 20; 7: 23.)

18. The ungodly little know how much they owe to the prayers of God's people. (Ver. 24; Isa. 1: 9.)

19. The lives of impenitent men are often spared because God interposes in behalf of his children. (Ver. 24; Gen. 19: 19-22.)

20. God's promises and purposes concerning men are often conditioned. "But we

must be cast on a certain island," suggests the use of means. (Ver. 26.)

21. Long waiting and great trials do not invalidate the promises of God, nor prevent their fulfillment. (Ver. 27; 2 Peter 3: 9.)

22. In carrying out his gracious plans concerning us, God expects us to use the means at hand. He does not do that which we can do ourselves. (Ver. 28, 29; John 21: 6.)

23. They who desert in times of peril and need are selfish and cowardly, and show a bad heart. (Ver. 30; John 6: 66-69.)

24. The purposes of God concerning future events include the means as well as the end. Seed-time and harvest are promised, yet the farmer will not reap except he sow. God's people are chosen unto salvation; yet none will be saved without repentance, faith, and a life becoming godliness. (Ver. 31; 1 Peter 1: 2, 14; Heb. 12: 14, 15.)

25. Faith in God is the root of true courage and productive of cheerfulness in the midst of adversity. (Ver. 33-36; Heb. 11: 32-34.)

26. "Cut off the ropes from every boat in which thou trustest besides God. Then shalt thou behold the morning light and enjoy his salvation." (Ver. 32.)

27. It is fitting to acknowledge God's goodness in partaking of food. In this we have the example of both Paul and Christ. (Ver. 35; John 6: 11.)

28. The gospel and those who truly exemplify it, tend to inspire men with cheerfulness and courage. (Ver. 36; Neh. 8: 10; Prov. 25: 11.)

29. War and bloodshed tend to blunt the sensibilities of men, and to undermine the sacredness of human life. (Ver. 42.)

30. It was Paul's religion which gave him favor with God and men. The Christian is the salt of the earth and the light of the world. (Ver. 43; Matt. 5: 13, 14.)

31. All of the two hundred and seventy-six were saved, though some with difficulty; so will all of God's people, though some as by fire. (Ver. 44; 1 Cor. 3: 15; 1 Peter 4: 18.)

32. God's people are everywhere safe in his keeping, on the ocean as well as on the land; and there shall not fail them anything that he has promised. (Ver. 43, 44; Dent. 31: 6.)

33. May we not believe that many of those saved from the shipwreck were led by Paul to a higher salvation through faith in Christ? (Ver. 24, 44.)

They pass the winter at Melita; journey to Rome.

28 AND when they were escaped, then they

knew that the island was called Melita.
2 And the barbarous people showed us no little kindness: for they kindled a fire

† Rom. 1 : 14 ; Col. 3 : 11.

Ch. 28 : In this chapter the narrative of Paul's journey to Rome is continued. For three months the shipwrecked company remain in Melita, after which they sail to Puteoli, whence they travel by land,—two deputations from the church at Rome meeting Paul by the way. At Rome Paul is treated with great indulgence as a prisoner. First to the Jews he expounds from the Scriptures concerning Jesus, as the Messiah; after which he turns chiefly to the Gentiles, continuing his labors for two years.

1-10. PAUL'S STAY AT MELITA. (Mark 16 : 18 ; Luke 10 : 19.) Winter of A. D. 60, 61, from about November 1 to February 1.

1. And when they were escaped—or, according to the oldest manuscripts, *And having escaped, we knew*, we came to know, *that the island is called Melita*. This language rather implies that they learned it from the people who had come down to view the wreck. From Citta Vecchia, the ancient capital of Malta, about five miles distant, the people in the morning could see the ship aground, and so could have been on the spot, to receive the escaping company, and tell them where they were. (*Alexander's Kitto*.) This is another incidental evidence that **Melita** is the modern *Malta*, an island seventeen miles long and nine broad, about fifty-six miles south of Sicily, and about two hundred miles from Cape Bon on the African coast. But some writers, and especially since the early part of last century, have held that *Melita* was the Austrian island, *Meleda*, in the Adriatic Sea, or Gulf of Venice, nineteen miles northwest of Ragusa. But this is improbable; for such a view supposes that Fair Havens was on the north side of Crete (27:8), that the Euroclydon was hot sirocco, blowing from the coast of Africa instead of toward the quicksands or Syrtis (27:14, 17), which is certainly inconsistent with "the present rain" and "cold." (ver. 2.) Besides,

to have reached that island from Clauda, and in fourteen days, and without seeing land, would have been almost miraculous. "To have been driven up the Adriatic to the island of Meleda in the requisite curve, and to have passed so many small islands and other dangers in the route, would, humanly speaking, have been impossible. The distance from Clauda to this Meleda is not less than seven hundred and twenty geographical miles, and the wind must have been long from the south to make this voyage in fourteen days." (ADMIRAL PENROSE, in *Conybeare and Howson, Life, etc., St. Paul*, vol. ii. p. 347.) Moreover, an Alexandrian ship would not naturally winter there (ver. 11), nor would it likely continue its voyage afterward to Puteoli, nor go to Syracuse before it went to Rhegium. (ver. 12, 13.) Hence this opinion is now rejected by all the best scholars. That *Malta* is the *Melita* of Paul there can be no doubt. (1) It is the traditional scene of the shipwreck. These traditions are numerous among the Maltese and go into the remote past. (2) It is on the track of Alexandrian ships, which often winter there. (ver. 11.) (3) It is situated whither a ship would drift under the circumstances described in about thirteen days. (See on 27 : 17.) Mr. Smith and Admiral Penrose made estimates of the probable direction and speed of the ship, independently of each other, and substantially agreed. (4) St. Paul's Bay, with its rocky shore, its soundings, its inlet and its beach, and its place where two seas meet, exactly corresponds with Luke's narrative. Even to see it amounts to a demonstration. Mr. Hermann Merivale says, in his account of a visit to Malta: "Under such guidance as his (that of Sir William Reid), the absolute and unmistakable identity of the spot with that described in the Acts flashed irresistibly upon the mind. . . . Under his description, every incident of the tale seemed as if

and received us every one, because of the present rain, and because of the cold.

3 And when Paul had gathered a bundle

of sticks, and laid *them* on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened 4 on his hand. And when the barbarians

enacted before the eye." (DEAN HOWSON, *Bohlen Lectures*, 1880, p. 154.)

(5) The subsequent voyage to Puteoli is such as would be naturally taken. The objections to this view have been often answered. The principal one, that Malta was not in the Adriatic Sea, overlooks the fact that this geographical term was applied to a much larger area formerly than now. (See on 27 : 27.) The other objections derived from the sailors not knowing the land (27 : 39), from the Maltese being called "barbarians" (ver. 2), from the fact that there are no vipers now in Malta (ver. 3), and from the false opinion that dysentery is unknown there (ver. 8), are really of no weight, and are incidentally answered in the notes.

2. The barbarous people—having reference not to their civilization, but to their language. (Rom. 1 : 14.) The Greeks and Romans were accustomed to call all *barbarians* who did not use their language. The Maltese were of Phœnician origin, and probably spoke a Phœnician dialect of the Hebrew. It came under Roman rule in the second Punic war, about 218, B. C. The modern Maltese speak a dialect of the Arabic, introduced at the Mohammedan conquest, intermingled with European languages. **Shewed us no little**—or *no common kindness*—that is, special kindness. (19 : 11.) **Received us every one**—*us all*, under their care and to their hospitality, now exhibited by kindling a large fire, and afterward by receiving them into their houses, or into places prepared for them. **Because of the present rain**—*on account of the rain having come upon us*. These voyagers had been exposed to the tempest, and had passed through the waves to the land. (27 : 44.) An additional reason is given : **Because of the cold**, showing that the Euraquilon (27 : 14) was continuing to blow. It could not have been the hot Sirocco, the southeast wind, which indeed continues only two or three days.

3. Paul exhibits his active spirit and his interest in everything that pertained

to their comfort, by keeping up the fire, which incidentally afforded an occasion for another proof of God's watch-care over him as his servant. **A bundle of sticks**—literally, *having twisted or rolled together into a bundle a great number of dried sticks or twigs*, brushwood and furze; which is said to be the only wood growing near St. Paul's Bay. **There came a viper out of the heat**, or *on account of the heat*. The serpent benumbed by the cold, stiff, and torpid, had been hastily gathered up with the twigs and brush; but now feeling the sudden warmth, was so aroused, that it sprang forth and with a single bound **fastened on Paul's hand**. Dr. Hackett, acknowledging indebtedness to Professor Agassiz, says, "Vipers, too, lurk in rocky places, and that is the character of the region where the incident occurred. They are accustomed also to dart at their enemies, sometimes several feet at a bound; and hence the one mentioned here could have reached the hand of Paul as he stood in the vicinity of the fire." It is said that there are no poisonous serpents now in Malta. They have disappeared with the increase of population and the clearing away of the wood. Mr. Smith refers to the gradual disappearance of the viper from the island of Arran. (*Voyage*, p. 151.) But Mr. Lewin states that he saw a snake on the island of Malta which looked like a viper. "We scarcely needed to excite our imaginations, the singular experience of a friend of mine at this spot (St. Paul's Bay), where a serpent dropped from a fagot of brushwood, which he had casually taken up." (MR. HERMANN MERIVALE, in *Dean Howson's Bohlen Lectures*, 1880, p. 155.)

4. **Venomous**—not in the Greek. **Beast** or *wild beast* (11 : 6); there is nothing in this word expressing venomous, but the idea is included in the word *viper* (ver. 3), and is implied in the exclamation and the astonishment of the natives. That it really bit the apostle must be inferred from the expressions, "fastened on his hand" and "hung on," better *from, his hand*,

saw the *venomous* beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, ^ε No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet Vengeance suffereth not to live. And he shook off the beast into the fire, and ^η felt no harm. 6 Howbeit they looked when he should have swollen, or fallen down dead sud-

denly; but after they had looked a great while, and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds, and ^ι said that he was a god.

7 In the same quarters were possessions of the chief man of the island, whose name was Publius; who received us, and lodged us three days courteously. And it came

^ε Luke 13 : 2, 4; John 9 : 1, 2.

^η Mark 16 : 18; Luke 10 : 19.

^ι ch. 14 : 11.

and the belief of the natives. They could easily examine Paul's hand to see whether he was bitten or not. **No doubt this man is a murderer**—they doubtless knew that Paul was a prisoner, from certain indications, as his chain, or being bound to a soldier. So, reasoning backward from death as a punishment to the crime, they concluded that he is a murderer. **Yet vengeance—justice**, the avenging justice of the Deity. Whether they personified justice, or referred to the heathen goddess of justice, is uncertain. It at least expressed their moral sense of retributive justice. **Suffereth**, more exactly, *suffered not to live*—his doom being looked upon as already fixed and certain.

5. But Paul is calm, and shows no alarm. **And he**, etc.—*He, however, shaking off the beast into the fire, suffered no evil.* Thus was fulfilled the promise of our Lord, "They shall take up serpents;" "I have given you power to tread on serpents . . . and nothing shall hurt you." (Mark 16 : 18; Luke 10 : 19.) The divine protection or power was exercised in preventing the imparting of the poison, or in neutralizing or counteracting it. Very likely the first. (Dau. 6 : 22.)

6. **Howbeit they looked**, etc. Better, *But they were expecting that he would become inflamed*, and as a result swollen. This was the usual and almost immediate effect of the adder's bite. **Or fall down dead suddenly**—such a result is recorded of the African serpents. **Saw no harm come to him. They changed their minds**, or opinion. **And said that he was a god**—in human form, or a divine person. "Observe the instability of human reasoning. He is either a murderer or a god. . . . There is a third supposition: he is a man of God. Respecting no class do natural

men err more than concerning the saints." (BENGEL.) The scene was the reverse of that at Lystra. There the people took him first to be a god, and afterward stoned him. (14 : 11, 19.)

7. **In the same quarters**, etc.; better, *Now around that place were the lands belonging to the chief man of the island.* His residence, according to tradition, was at Medina, the modern *Citta Vecchia*, an inland city and the ancient capital, about five miles distant. His lands may have extended down near to St. Paul's Bay. In that city have been found two inscriptions, one in Greek and the other in Latin, on which is this same title, *chief of the Melitans*, which appears to refer to the chief magistrate or governor of Melita. The island belonged to the province of Sicily, ruled by a Prætor, and **Publius** may have been his deputy at this place. President Woolsey (quoted by Dr. Hackett) speaks of an earlier Greek inscription, in which two persons are mentioned as holding the office of magistrate in the island. Also a later inscription, from which it appears that a person might be called the chief man, although his magistracy had expired. However this may be, the accuracy of Luke is maintained, in the proper application of a Roman title. **Who received us, and lodged us three days courteously**—until arrangements could be made for settled quarters. It was natural for Publius to pay special attention to Julius, a Roman officer, and his party. The remarkable prominence to which Paul had attained in the shipwreck, and his miraculous preservation from the bite of the viper, would give him notoriety, and commend him to Publius. Most expositors limit *us*, the recipients of this hospitality, to Paul, Luke, and Aristarchus, with probably the noble-hearted Julius, and

to pass, that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever and of a bloody flux: to whom Paul entered in, and ^kprayed, and ^llaid ⁹his hands on him, and healed him. So when this was done, others also, which

had diseases in the island, came and were ¹⁰healed. Who also honoured us with many honours; and when we departed, they ^laded us with such things as were necessary.

^k James 5 : 14, 15.

^l ch. 19 : 11, 12; Mark 6 : 5; 7 : 32; Luke 4 : 40.

possibly the officers, or the soldiers under him. The narrative gathers principally around Paul. (See on ver. 10.)

8. The kindness of Publius is repaid. No one loses by such hospitality to a servant of God. (Heb. 13 : 2.) In the miraculous cure of the father of Publius, Luke mentions the disease in accurate and professional language, characteristic of his writings (Luke 4 : 38; 9 : 43), and as a physician naturally would. **Lay sick of a fever and of a bloody flux—ordysentery.** The original for the word fever is in the plural *fevers*, probably with reference to the paroxysms of an intermittent fever. "Here also we have the testimony of Hippocrates, who uses fevers in the plural." (Epid. iii.) (SMITH, *Voyage*, pp. 3, 155.) It has been objected to Melita being Malta, because in that dry, rocky, and healthy island, it has been contended that dysentery never occurs. But this is a mistake. Mr. Smith says, "Dr. Galland, of Valetta, informs me that the disease is by no means uncommon in Malta." (*Voyage*, p. 172.) "It happens that the writer of the present note has been beside the bedside of a friend suffering from dysentery in Malta." (HOWSON AND SPENCE.) The cure was effected by Paul through prayer and the laying on of hands, doubtless in the name of Jesus. (3 : 16; James 5 : 14, 15.)

9. The healing of the father of Publius is but the beginning of a large number of cures during the stay of Paul at Malta. **Others also—more exactly, And the rest who had diseases came to him and were cured.** The island not being very large, nor the number of inhabitants very great, the report of Paul's miracle could be easily noised throughout. Since Paul was a prisoner, he could not go to those suffering from infirmities, but they must be brought to him. The language is popular and general, but

it is not at all incredible that *the rest* includes all the sick who were able to come to him, or to be brought to him. There was at least a general coming from all parts of the island. No doubt that Paul improved his opportunity, as on another occasion (Gal. 3 : 13, 14), of proclaiming Jesus, the great Physician, and his gospel. It is reasonable to believe that Christianity was introduced into the island at this time. According to a tradition Publius was the first pastor in the island.

10. This verse is closely connected with the last verse. **Who also—**not merely came and were healed, but also in gratitude **honored us**, Paul and his company, *with many marks of honor*. They extended to them a generous hospitality, including doubtless such things as would be needed by travelers who had lost everything by shipwreck. Some would limit *honors* to gifts and pecuniary fees, such as a physician might receive. But this is too contracted a meaning here, and it was contrary to Christ's command to receive reward for such miraculous deeds. (Matt. 10 : 8.) Besides, these marks of honor were during their stay on the island, and are distinguished from the presents made at their departure. Notice that the whole ship's company is designated *us all* in verse 2, while simply *us* is used in this verse, and is more naturally restricted to Paul and his company. **And when we departed—better, And when we put to sea.** (27 : 2, 4.) **They laded us**, etc. *They put on board such things as were needed*, provisions and other necessities for the voyage, and perhaps money. The idea in the original is that of large and numerous gifts. While the marks of honor had been specially bestowed on Paul and his company, because of the miracles performed, the numerous gifts were probably extended also to others at their departure. Publius

11 And after three months we departed in a ship of Alexandria, which had wintered in the isle, whose sign was Castor and Pollux. And landing at Syracuse, we

13 tarried *there* three days. And from thence we fetched a compass, and came to Rhegium: and after one day the south wind blew, and we came the next day to Pu-

would doubtless set the example, and the others who had been largely benefited would not be slow to follow.

11-16. JOURNEY FROM MELITA TO ROME. (Phil. 1: 12-14.) The month of February, A. D. 61. Luke still narrates as an eye-witness.

11. And after three months—the season of sailing had again come. They would naturally embrace the earliest opportunity. It was probably early in February. **We departed—we put to sea**, as in ver. 10. It was doubtless in the harbor of Valetta, which then, as now, was the harbor of the island, on its northeast side, where the ship had wintered, and from whence they set sail. (Ver. 39.) **A ship of Alexandria**, as was also that in which they had been shipwrecked. (27: 6.) This seems to have been a merchant grain ship, which had been compelled to winter at Malta, probably by the same wind which had wrecked the other vessel. Malta, on the line between Alexandria and Italy, was a convenient place to winter, if delayed by storm. **Whose sign was Castor and Pollux**—marked with the image or figure of the twin brothers, whose names were Castor and Pollux. These, in heathen mythology, were the sons of Jupiter and Leda, and were regarded as the guardian gods of sailors. They were said also to have been translated to the sky and placed among the stars as the constellation of the *Gemini*. They were specially honored in the districts about Alexandria. They were sometimes represented as stars, but more frequently as young men on horseback, or their heads simply given. The Alexandrians usually ornamented each side of the prow of ships with figures; in this case, Castor was probably painted on one side and Pollux on the other. The ship must have been large to have accommodated so many beside its own.

12. The vessel takes the regular route from Valetta in a northerly direction about eighty miles, which, in favorable weather, could be accomplished in a

day, to Syracuse, the famous capital of Sicily, on its southeastern coast. Here they **landed**, or *touched* (27: 3), and **tarried three days**, either for purposes of trade, or for favorable winds.

13. **We fetched a compass**—rather, *making a circuit*. Probably the favorable wind did not come, and they therefore follow the windings of the coast, or take a zig-zag movement, known among sailors as tacking; or, the wind being westerly, they stood out to sea, and so came circuitously to Rhegium. “I am inclined to suppose that the wind was northwest, and that they worked windward, availing themselves of the sinuosities of the coast; but with this wind they could not proceed through the Straits of Messina. . . . They were, therefore, obliged to put into Rhegium at the entrance of the strait.” (SMITH *Voyage*, p. 156.)

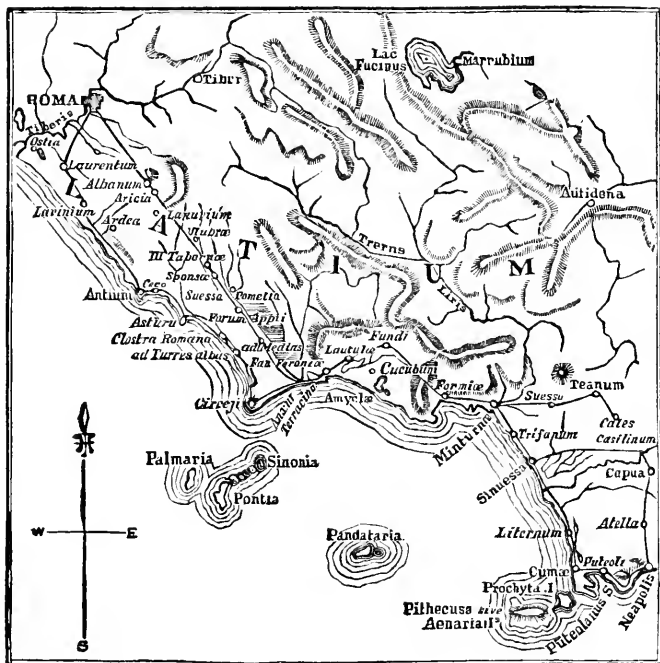
Rhegium, the modern *Reggio*, near the southern point of Italy, opposite Messina, and about seventy miles north of Syracuse. As they made a circuitous route they probably took more than one day. **And after one day**, waiting at Rhegium, **a south wind blew**, or *arose*, the most favorable wind both for passing through the strait and for a speedy passage northward to Puteoli. In this strait was the famous passage of Scylla and Charybdis, considered dangerous even at the present day. Puteoli lay about one hundred and eighty miles from Rhegium, and as they arrived there **the next day**, they occupied more than one day, and less than two, in the voyage. This accords with the speed of ancient vessels which, with a favorable wind, could go from six to seven miles an hour. From the Straits of Messina they could see Mount Ætna, and from Puteoli, Vesuvius. **Puteoli**, the modern *Pozzuoli*, “was then, as now, the most sheltered part of the Bay of Naples,” about seven miles northwest of the city of that name. “It was the principal port of Southern Italy, and in particular it was the great emporium of the Alexandrian wheat-ships. Seneca, in

14 teoli; where we found brethren, and were

desired to tarry with them seven days;

one of his epistles, gives an interesting and graphic account of the arrival of the Alexandrian fleet. All ships entering the bay were obliged to strike their topsails, except wheat-ships, which were allowed to carry theirs." (SMITH *Voyage*, p. 157.) Thus it has been said that we know the very man-

14. Where we found brethren. Here a Christian church existed, who doubtless had heard of Paul, and of his proposed visit to Rome, mentioned in his Epistle to the Romans four years before. It is the only notice in the New Testament of a Christian congregation in Italy outside of Rome. (See



ner in which the vessel bearing Paul entered into port. It was the customary harbor of the imperial city for ships from the East, though Rome was one hundred and seventy miles distant, and passengers and freight were transported thither. Thirteen piers of the mole still remain in the harbor where Paul landed. Indeed, many other remains exist in the city which, in Paul's day, stood in all their splendor.

(Heb. 13 : 24.) Christianity had probably been carried into Italy soon after the Pentecostal outpouring. Believers also probably came thither from Alexandria. Josephus speaks of Jews at Dicearchia, the original name of Puteoli. (*Antiq.* xvii. 12, 3.) **And were desired,** rather, *were entreated to remain with them seven days.* The request appears to have been granted. Thus news of Paul's arrival would be

15 and so we went toward Rome. And from thence, when the brethren heard of us,

they came to meet us as far as Appii Forum, and the Three Taverns: whom

sent to the brethren at Rome. (Ver. 15.) The believers could also be assembled for hearing Paul and the breaking of bread on the Lord's Day, as at Troas (20: 6, 7) and at Tyre. (21: 4.) The kind and grateful centurion was under too great obligation to Paul to refuse any reasonable request. There may also have been other reasons why Julius might willingly remain at Puteoli. **And so**—after this delay, **we went toward Rome**, or more exactly, *we came into Rome*, without any farther delay. The statement of the completed journey is here briefly made; and in the next verse, some details of the journey from Puteoli to Rome on foot are given. But Dr. Hackett prefers to render *they went unto Rome* with the idea of *toward*, a phrase similar to that in 27: 1, "That we should sail to Italy," and to John 20: 3, "They went to," or "*toward* the sepulchre." Meyer and Alford prefer the former.

15. Some incidents on the way to Rome. From Puteoli they probably went to Capua, the nearest point on the Appian Way, the great road to Rome. Mr. S. Russell Forbes, who has resided at Rome for over twenty years, gives an interesting account of this journey in his *Footsteps of St. Paul at Rome*. In the matter of distances and in some other things he differs from the general authorities. He says (p. 6): "Too soon the week passed away, and then commenced the long march to Rome, one hundred and seventy miles distant, leaving Puteoli by the Consular Way to Capua, where they struck into the Via Appia, one hundred and fifty-one miles from Rome. Resting here for one night, they proceeded along the 'Queen of long roads,' and by easy stages toward Rome. From the time of leaving the coast till their arrival in the Eternal City only two small places are mentioned; but of course many of interest were passed. Two days after leaving Capua, they would arrive at Terracina, seventy-five miles from Rome; and the next morning, continuing their way, in two and a half miles they would cross the stream

which flows from the Fountain of Feronia. . . . The Grove of Feronia was on the edge of the Pontine Marshes, and in St. Paul's day no road existed through them, the road being made afterwards by Trajan. Traffic was conducted through the marshes by means of a canal, which still exists; and passengers coming to Rome embarked at the Grove of Feronia, and were towed in barges through the marshes. . . . After a long, slow journey they landed at Appii Forum, forty-three miles from the imperial city. . . . *Forum Appii* was a town of the Volsci, and named the Forum of Appius from Appius Claudius, who founded here a market for the convenience of the country people when he made the Appian Way, B. C. 312. It is mentioned by Pliny (iii. 9) in the list of colonies. . . . Horace left Appii Forum in the evening and reached Feronia at ten A. M., doing the distance of the canal (twenty-seven miles) in sixteen hours. Suetonius ('Tiberius' ii.) says, 'Claudius Drusus erected a statue of himself at Appii Forum.' . . . Horace describes it as 'stuffed with sailors and surly landlords.' Some fragments of ruins and the forty-third milestone are all that remain of Appii Forum."

When the brethren heard of us. During the week spent at Puteoli there had been abundant opportunity and time for them to hear of Paul's arrival in Italy, and when he would start for Rome. These brethren who came to meet Paul included probably some of those who are mentioned in Rom. 16: 1-16. Two companies set out to meet him: one starting earlier than the other. The first one, those perhaps better able to perform the journey go forth **as far as Appii Forum**, or *the Market of Appius* (see note above); the other company meet him at the Three Taverns. Thus they welcome Paul with attentions so often paid to beloved guests at parting. (15: 3; 20: 38; 21: 5.) **The Three Taverns** or *shops*, was one of the halting places on the Appian Way. The site is perhaps uncertain, and has been usually placed at

when Paul saw, ^mhe thanked God, and took courage.

16 And when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the cap-

tain of the guard: but ⁿPaul was suffered to dwell by himself with a soldier that kept him.

^m Rom. 1 : 7-10 ; 15 : 23, 32.

ⁿ ch. 24 : 23 ; 27 : 3.

thirty-three miles from Rome, and ten miles nearer than Appii Forum. Mr. Forbes places it, however, at nine miles from Rome, the last halting place before reaching the city, and says, "The site is well identified, not only by tradition, but by classical authority." Also, "Aurelius Victor records that Gallienus had a villa here, and that his tomb was at the ninth mile." Also regarding Cicero's letter from The Three Taverns to Atticus, on April 3, 59 B. C., he says, "Cicero had left his villa at Antium, and the road from thence runs into the Appian Way at the eleventh mile from Rome, as we have seen, so that the Three Taverns would be the first halting place on the Appian Way for Cicero, where he could and did write to Appian whilst the horses were being changed." (*Foot-steps*, etc., pp. 11, 12.) Mr. Forbes mentions the Chapel of St. Paul there now used as a stable. *Whom seeing*, the brethren who had come to help him on his journey, and doubtless to present to him the salutations of the church. *Paul thanked God*, for their sympathy, and for the answer to his prayers that he might visit Rome and the brethren, of which this was a foretaste. (Rom. 1 : 8-11.) **And took courage**—his own jaded spirits were revived in seeing the evidences of the end of so long and perilous a journey; inspired by the presence of Christian brethren; and encouraged in God, at the evidences and prospects of the cause of Christ at Rome (Rom. 1 : 13-15), and because his assured hopes of being a blessing there were about to be fulfilled. (15 : 29.)

16. And when we came to Rome—probably on the sixth day after leaving Puteoli. They had passed many objects of interest, grand sights, splendid scenery, monuments, temples, and noted buildings on this "the most celebrated of Italian roads;" but Luke makes no reference to these, since they were foreign to the objects of his nar-

ative, and did not relate to the spread of the gospel throughout the world. (1 : 8.)

The centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard—*of the praetorian camp*, where was quartered the body-guard of the emperor. (Phil. 1 : 13.) The captain was probably the Praetorian Prefect, who had charge of those persons from the provinces whose cases were to be brought before Caesar. There were generally two of these; but at this time under Nero there was but one, named Burrus, who was put to death in March, A. D. 62. There is here an exact coincidence, in that *captain* is in the singular, and not in the plural. (See *Harmonic Arrangement*, p. 243.) These words, however, are not found in the oldest manuscripts, and are omitted in the Revised Version, and by Westcott and Hort, and others. They do not, however, have the character of most interpolations, being entirely independent of anything either in the Acts or in Paul's Epistles: and it is difficult to see why they should have been added. But a reason for their omission can be seen in the similarity of words in the original, and thus the eye of an early scribe might have passed over and omitted them. For such reasons both Meyer and Alford retained them. But aside from the question of the genuineness of this passage, Paul was doubtless committed to this officer, and carried to the Praetorian camp. Arriving by the Appian Way he must have entered the city on the south by the Capena Gate, and proceeded across the city to the northeast corner of the present wall "to the Praetorian Camp, situated on the neck of Viminal Hill." With this ended the centurion Julius' care of Paul.

But Paul was suffered, by the prefect, **to dwell alone** by himself, separated from the other prisoners instead of being confined with them in the prison near the Praetorian camp,

Paul's interview with the Jews at Rome. His condition during his captivity.

17 AND it came to pass that after three days Paul called the chief of the Jews together: and when they were come together, he said unto them, Men and

brethren, though I have committed nothing against the people, or customs of our fathers, yet I was delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans. Who, when they had examined me, would have let me go, be-

• ch. 23: 1; 24: 12, 13; 25: 8, 10.

P ch. 21: 33.

¶ ch. 22: 24; 25: 8, 25; 26: 31, 32.

The lenity shown him was probably due in part to the commendation and influence of the centurion Julius, who owed so much to Paul's presence and advice in the journey thither. Yet this privilege was also accorded him because he was a Roman; "for it was against the law to put a Roman into prison without trial." We have many instances of this in Roman history; and "so Junius Gallio, brother of Seneca, was kept under a guard in the house of a magistrate." (TACITUS, *Annals*, VI. 3. *Forbes' Footsteps*, etc., p. 19.) Paul was not entirely alone, but was **with a soldier who kept him.** (See on 12: 6.) It was the custom to chain one hand of the prisoner to the soldier while on guard; and it would seem, from ver. 29, that this was the case with Paul. But some think that he was merely accompanied and guarded by the soldier. The frequent change of this guard gave Paul the opportunity of presenting the message of the gospel to the soldiers throughout the camp, and thus his captivity resulted in the furtherance of the gospel. (Phil. 1: 12-14.)

17-31. PAUL AT ROME. Two interviews with the Jews: his condition during his captivity. (John 12: 39, 40; Eph. 6: 18-20; Philem. 8, 9, 22; Isa. 6: 9, 10.) Paul entered Rome about March 1, A. D. 61, and this last section of the Acts takes us two years to the spring of A. D. 63.

17. From this point to the end of the book, no reference is made to the Christians already at Rome; but to Paul's work among unbelievers. He would not build on another man's foundation. (Rom. 15: 20.) From ver. 14, 15 we learn that Christianity had taken root both at Puteoli and Rome; and from the names at Rome to whom Paul sent salutations in Rom. 16: 1-15, we infer that there were three congregations of believers, one at least among the Jews (Rom. 16: 5), and perhaps two among the Gentiles. (Rom. 16: 14, 15.)

After three days—a sufficient time for rest and for receiving calls from his Christian brethren, and learning about the Christian congregations at Rome, and arranging his lodgings mentioned in ver. 23. **Paul called the chief of the Jews together** to him. These were probably the heads of leading families, and the rulers and elders of the synagogues. The Jews were numerous at Rome. The edict by Claudius, banishing the Jews (18: 2) had been either tacitly or openly annulled; and under the mild government of Nero, during the first five years of his reign, they had returned in large numbers, as in the case of Aquila and Priscilla. (Rom. 16: 3.) The marriage of Nero to Poppæa, a proselyte to Judaism, was also somewhat favorable to them. They dwelt in the quarter of the city beyond the river Tiber, on its west side. As was his custom, Paul gave his first attention to the Jews. (Rom. 1: 16.) He thus gave practical proof of his deep anxiety for them, expressed in Rom. 9: 1-3; 10: 1. This full account of Paul's last recorded appeal to his countrymen reminds us of our Lord's last words to the unbelieving Jews (John 12: 36 f.) **Though I have committed nothing against the people**, etc. He had sought their salvation by offering the gospel first to them. He did not regard the gospel as antagonistic to the law. Compare his answers before Felix (24: 14-16), and before Agrippa (26: 6, 7, 22, 23). He had not forbidden circumcision to his own countrymen, only insisting that Gentile converts should not be required to submit to it and to the Mosaic ceremonials. **Delivered prisoner . . . into the hands of the Romans**—to Felix and Festus, as is evident from the next verse. He states in brief without giving the steps narrated in ch. 21-23.

18. **Who, when they had examined me, would, rather, wished,**

cause there was no cause of death in me.
 19 But when the Jews spake against *it*, [†]I was constrained to appeal unto Cæsar; not that I had aught to accuse my nation of.
 20 For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see *you*, and to speak with *you*: because that ^{*}for the hope of Israel I am bound with [†]this chain.

21 And they said unto him, We neither received letters out of Judea concerning thee, neither any of the brethren that came showed or spake any harm of thee.
 22 But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, we know that every where [‡]it is spoken against.

^{*} ch. 25 : 10-12.

^{*} ch. 26 : 6, 7.

[†] ch. 26 : 29; Eph. 3 : 1; Phil. 1 : 13; 2 Tim. 1 : 16; Philom. 10 : 13.

[‡] ch. 24 : 5, 14; Luke 2 : 34; 1 Peter 2 : 12.

to let me go, etc. This expresses their own honest convictions and desire. They were convinced of his innocence. Felix wished to release him, but hoped for money. (24 : 26.) Festus had no charges to write (25 : 26); and Agrippa adjudged him innocent. (26 : 31, 32.)

19. I was constrained to appeal to Cæsar. As his Jewish persecutors were determined on his death, and as Festus was not sufficiently resolute to release and protect him, he was compelled to do this to get justice, and for his own safety. **Not that I have aught to accuse my nation of**—before this tribunal. He was a patriotic Jew; his act in appealing to Cæsar was purely defensive, and not one hostile to his nation. He had no design nor desire to do anything to bring any more trouble to his fellow countrymen, whether they were his accusers in Judea, or his brethren at Rome.

20. For this cause therefore—as involved in the preceding statement: innocent and compelled to do that which he would rather not have done, in his own defence and without any hostile intent toward any of his nation. **I have called for you, to see and speak with you.** This is to be preferred to the rendering, *Did I entreat you to see and speak with me.* The supplying of *me* as the object of *to see* is arbitrary and destroys the unity of the sentence. So Hackett and Meyer. **Because that for the hope of Israel**—the Messiah. (See on 26 : 6, 7.) **I am bound with this chain**, hanging upon his arm, and perhaps fastened to the soldier who guarded him. He refers to his “bonds” in his epistles during his imprisonment. (Eph. 6 : 20; Phil. 1 : 7; Col. 4 : 18.) Mr. Forbes thinks that Paul was not chained to, but accompanied by, a soldier, and that “when the apostle speaks of ‘these my

chains, these bonds,’ it is simply a figure of speech used to show that he had not his full liberty.” (*Footsteps*, etc., p. 24.)

21. Their answer appears to be candid, and probably referred to official communications received, and information concerning the charges which the Jews brought against him, of which Paul declared his innocence. **We neither received letters**, etc. This is not strange; for the Jews at Jerusalem were not expecting his appeal to Cæsar, but were hoping to accomplish his death. After his appeal they had not had time. A statement of the case must be prepared and persons selected and sent, and these would follow, not precede Paul. **Neither any of the brethren that came**, etc.—more exactly, *Nor did any of the brethren coming report or speak any evil concerning thee.* The reference seems to be not to brethren coming at any time, but to messengers connected with this trial and appeal; and the implication in the original is, that no one had thus come. Thus far the Jewish leaders speak with reference to what Paul had said in ver. 17-20.

22. But having received no complaint and having no charge to make, *we think it proper to hear of thee what thou thinkest*—to hear thy opinion and feelings regarding the Messiah, “the hope of Israel.” (Ver. 20. See ver. 23.) Under the circumstances, and before a prisoner who was receiving such kind treatment from Roman officials, they could not well do otherwise than profess themselves open to conviction. **Concerning this sect**—they knew that Paul was a Christian. It is intimated in ver. 20, and probably Paul had told them plainly. **We know that everywhere it is spoken against**—both among Jews

23 And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into *his* lodging; ^ato whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, ⁷both out of the Law of Moses, and *out of* the Prophets, 24 from morning till evening. And ²some

believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not.

25 And when they had agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, ^aWell spake the Holy Spirit by Esaias the prophet unto 26 our fathers, saying, ^b'Go unto this peo-

^a ch. 17 : 3; Luke 24 : 27. ⁷ ch. 26 : 6, 22. ^a ch. 14 : 4; 17 : 4. ^a Matt. 15 : 7; 2 Peter 1 : 21. ^b Jer. 5 : 21; Ezek. 12 : 2; Mark 4 : 12; Rom. 11 : 8.

and Gentiles. (16 : 20, 21; 17 : 6; 24 : 5.) Tacitus, the Roman historian who wrote in the days of the Emperor Nero, speaks of the Christian religion as "a detestable superstition;" and Suetonius, writing in the same reign, describes Christians as "a race of men holding a novel and criminal superstition." Christians at that time at Rome, as elsewhere, were spoken against. Their desire to hear Paul does not necessarily imply that they were ignorant of Christians and their doctrines. It was natural that they should wish to hear what so distinguished a leader would say. There were doubtless reasons for the reserve manifested in this whole reply. As Paul's case was to come before the highest tribunal, they would not prejudice it; nor would they now appear to put themselves in hostility to him, or to the Christian community. The fact that they ignore it implies a certain contempt; and their reserve as to their knowledge of Christians may have arisen from prudential considerations, and from a desire to give Paul the greatest freedom in expressing his views. Besides it was *proper to hear* before expressing a positive opinion.

23. The result of the first interview was the appointment for a second. But a few days probably intervened between the two. At the second interview **many**, literally, *more*, that is, *a greater number*, **came to him unto his lodging**, to the place where he was entertained as a guest; for so does the word lodging here imply. Although a prisoner, he was permitted to be a guest, under bonds and a guard, with brethren. Perhaps with Aquila, with whom he had lived at Corinth; or with some of his kinsmen. (Rom. 16 : 8, 10, 13.) It was natural that he should first have temporary lodgings as a guest; and after a little make permanent ar-

range for his own hired house. (Ver. 30.) **Expounded**—explained the matter regarding the kingdom of God. **Testified**—bearing witness to the **kingdom of God** as now manifested in the reign of the Messiah Jesus, under the New Dispensation. (See on 1 : 3.) **Persuading them concerning Jesus**—that he was the Messiah and that they should believe on him. (See 24 : 14; 26 : 22.) **From morning—from early morning—till evening**. We may conceive the great earnestness of Paul on the one hand, and much interest and many inquiries of the people on the other. Paul's discourse must have been largely conversational.

24. The result was the same as in other places. **Some believed . . . and some believed not**, or *disbelieved*. (13 : 43-45; 14 : 1, 2; 18 : 6, 8.) From what follows it would seem that the majority of the hearers would not be persuaded, but continued in positive unbelief.

25. **They agreed not among themselves**—there being a general expression of different views, and discussion. **They departed**—not abruptly, but *were dismissed*, in an orderly manner (19 : 41); **after that Paul had spoken one final word**, closing their lengthy interview, containing solemn admonition and reflection, and prophetic of their doomed condition. **Well spake**—the description being appropriate and exact. **The Holy Spirit through Isaiah**—teaching his inspiration. (2 Peter 1 : 21.) **Unto our**—or according to several of the oldest manuscripts, *your fathers*. Thus like fathers, like sons.

26. The passage quoted is from Isa. 6 : 9, 10, given almost exactly in the language of the Septuagint. It is quoted more frequently than any other passage in the New Testament. (Matt. 13 : 14; Mark 4 : 12; Luke 8 : 10; John 12 : 40. See

ple, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: for the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal

28 them' [Isa. vi. 9, 10] Be it known therefore unto you, ^athat ^dthe salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it.

29 And when he had said these words, the Jews departed, and had great reasoning among themselves.

30 And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that

^c ch. 11 : 18 ; 14 : 27 ; 26 : 17, 18 ; Isa. 49 : 6 ; Matt. 21 : 41, 43 ; Rom. 11 : 11. ^d Isa. 52 : 10 ; Luke 3 : 6.

Rom. 11 : 25.) **Hearing ye shall hear,** etc. Ye hear and see outwardly, with your senses, but do not apprehend the truth in its spiritual import. (See on Matt. 13 : 14.)

27. For the heart of this people is waxed gross, etc.—descriptive of spiritual insensibility. **Their eyes have they closed**—voluntary on their part. **Lest they should see,** etc.—it was God's purpose also on account of their wickedness and hardness of heart. **Should be converted,** or *should turn again* with true repentance, **and I should heal them**—forgive and save them. (Mark 4 : 12.) Willful blindness is a crime, and judicial blindness is its punishment. (See on Matt. 13 : 15. Compare 2 Cor. 4 : 3, 4.) "In this fearful process there are three distinguishable agencies expressly or implicitly described,—the ministerial agency of the Prophet, the judicial agency of God, and the suicidal agency of the people themselves. The original passage makes the first of these prominent. (Fatten the hearts of this people, dull their ears, shut their eyes, etc.) The quotation in John 12 : 40 calls attention to the second. (He hath blinded their eyes and hardened their heart.) That in Matt. 13 : 15, like the one before us, dwells upon the third, and represents the people as destroyed by their own insensibility and unbelief. We have thus a striking and instructive instance of the way in which the same essential truth may be exhibited in different parts of Scripture, under several distinct aspects or successive phases." (ALEXANDER.)

28. Be it known therefore—because ye are so hardened and irrecoverable. This formula introduces a solemn and authoritative declaration. (2 : 14 ; 4 : 10 ; 13 : 38.) **The,** or according

to the oldest manuscripts, *this salvation*, this message of *salvation* containing God's only method of saving men. *Is sent*, literally, *was sent unto the Gentiles*—implying that this was not a new procedure. It had been announced before at Antioch in Pisidia (13 : 46), and at Corinth. (18 : 6.) In this instance this salvation was sent by God to the Gentiles, by the coming of the Apostle of the Gentiles to Rome, the metropolis of the world. **And that they will hear it**—rather, *They, also, will hear*, will heed, accept, and obey. Compare the words of our Lord to the chief priests and Pharisees. (Matt. 21 : 43.) How prophetic Paul's words! How remarkable that Gospel history should close with the same quotation as that used by John in regard to the closing of our Lord's ministry among the Jews. (John 12 : 40.)

29. This verse is not found in the oldest and best manuscripts, and is omitted by the highest critical authorities. It is supposed to have been added by some copyist as a fitting conclusion. But the facts contained in it are included substantially in ver. 25. Yet even possibly, as Alford suggests, "*It may*, perhaps, after all, have been omitted as appearing superfluous after ver. 25."

30. Two whole years. That Paul's trial was so long delayed accords with what we know regarding trials from distant provinces. The presence of the prosecutor was required by Roman law. The Jews appear to have been slow in sending deputations to Rome. Josephus writes of some Jewish prisoners sent by Felix to Rome, who were detained three years and then released by Josephus' influence. Not until later did the law provide that the failure of the prosecutor for a year

should be regarded as an abandonment of the case. In addition to what is here recorded concerning Paul, we may gather certain facts from his four Epistles, written from Rome during the time, to the Ephesians, the Philippians, the Colossians, and Philemon. From those we learn that Luke continued with him (Col. 4: 14), and doubtless at this time wrote this book. Aristarchus appears also as fellow laborer and a fellow prisoner. (Col. 4: 10; Philem. 24.) Tychicus too was with him for a time, who was the bearer of his letter to the Ephesians (Eph. 6: 21); and Timothy (Phil. 1: 1; Col. 1: 1; Philem. 1); Epaphroditus brought contributions from the church at Philippi (Phil. 4: 18), Mark and Jesus, called Justus, both Jews, were fellow-workers and a comfort to him (Col. 4: 10); Epaphras had come to him from Colosse (Col. 1: 7; 4: 12); Onesimus, a runaway slave and a convert of Paul at Rome, became very useful to him, but was sent back by him to his master. (Philem. 10-16.) Demas was also with the apostle, and a fellow laborer (Col. 4: 14; Philem. 24); though later he left him through love of the present world. (2 Tim. 4: 10.) **In his own hired house**—at his own expense, doubtless through the liberality of friends at Rome and in the provinces. (Phil. 4: 10-14.) This was arranged after the first days when he lodged as a guest. (Ver. 23.) Where this hired house was we are not told. It has been inferred that it was near the Pretorian camp, for the convenience of the soldiers who guarded him. Others, however, believe that it was in the Jewish quarter of the city. So Mr. Forbes, who says: "St. Paul, because he was a Roman, was allowed to live in his own house till he was called upon to plead. They could not put him in prison unheard; and as probably he could not find a surety, a soldier was answerable for him. We know from Cicero (*against Verres*) that it was 'a crime to scourge a Roman, a sin to put him in prison, uncondemned, and fraticide to put him to death.' Living in his own house he could do pretty much as he liked. . . On the borders of the modern Ghetto there is a house which Jewish tradition has handed down, as being the hired house of St. Paul while at Rome. The house

is of ancient Roman construction. . . . We know that St. Paul was a Jew, and had business among the Jews at Rome, and it is natural to suppose that he would dwell near them. The Ghetto has been the Jewish quarter from the time of Pompey to this day. . . . The Jewish tradition is strengthened by a tradition of the Roman church, which says St. Paul had a school on the site of the church St. Paolo alla Regola, which is within one hundred yards of the reputed house. Thus we have two traditions handed down by two antagonistic faiths meeting close together near the Jewish quarter, one pointing out a school and the other a house of the great apostle." (*Footsteps of St. Paul*, p. 23, f.)

Received all that came in unto him—he *welcomed* them, received them with joy, so great was his pleasure in preaching the kingdom of God. (See 15: 4.) So Hackett. That they came to him implies that he was, during all this time, waiting for his trial, as a prisoner, for nothing is said of his preaching elsewhere. And this agrees with his references to himself in his epistles. (See on ver. 20.) This verse also implies that at the end of two years there was a change in his condition. It has been commonly held that Paul was chained to one soldier by day, and to two by night. Mr. Forbes holds that he was only under the guard of a soldier, that he had to present himself at stated times to the authorities, and that he could go around the city, accompanied by a soldier, but not beyond its bounds. (See on ver. 20.) But this verse implies that he was in custody in his own hired house. Perhaps not chained there—to his guard, but only when he went out. Dr. Hackett refers to the imprisonment of Agrippa I. in his early life, recorded by Josephus (*Antiq.* xviii, 5 f), as confirmatory and illustrative of Luke's account of Paul as a prisoner. Agrippa was first committed after arrest, to the prefect, and confined in the Pretorian camp, under a guard of soldiers, to one of whom he was chained. He was first treated with great severity, but afterward, under a guard of a milder disposition, his condition was improved, and

31 came in unto him, *preaching the kingdom of God, and †teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ,

with all confidence, no man forbidding him.

* ch. 8 : 12; Matt. 4 : 23. † ch. 23 : 11.

friends were permitted to visit him and supply his necessary wants. (See 24 : 23.) On the death of Tiberias his condition was again improved. Caligula ordered him to be removed from the Pretorian camp to the house where he had lived before he was arrested. Here he was still guarded as a prisoner, but his condition was one of comparative liberty. It was doubtless very much like that of Paul "in his own hired house."

31. Here, as elsewhere in the Acts, Luke distinguishes between **preaching and teaching**. Paul *announced* the glad tidings of the Messianic kingdom (ver. 23) to those who had not accepted it, and especially to the new comers, and *explained* the facts and doctrines concerning Jesus the Messiah to the brethren and inquirers. This he did with **all confidence**—with all *freedom and boldness*. **No man forbidding him**—without hindrance, or obstruction by the authorities of the Roman government. An abrupt close in regard to Paul's labors; but a fitting close of such a book. Luke had traced the beginnings and the early progress of Christian churches, both among Jews and Gentiles, at the same time illustrating how the apostles and the evangelists were witnesses of Christ, from Jerusalem, the capital of Judaism, to Rome, the capital of heathenism, "in Jerusalem and in all Judea, in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (1 : 8.) Thus was completed the first chapter of Christian history, an inspired object lesson of missionary labor for all ages.

That great success attended these missionary labors of Paul at Rome may be inferred from his epistles (Phil. 1 : 12-14, etc.), and from the multitude of Christians who were put to death in the terrible persecution under Nero, A. D. 64. Mr. Forbes believes that two churches still exist, which date before the close of the first century, and were established during Paul's captivity. "We allude to the church of Pudens, brought to notice by Mr. J. H. Parker,

of Oxford; and to the church and house of Clement, discovered by the late Rev. Father Mullooney, head of the Irish Dominicans in Rome." (*Footsteps*, etc., p. 27.) (2 Tim. 4 : 21.)

Some hold that Paul suffered martyrdom under Nero, A. D. 64. But it has been the general belief in all ages that Paul was tried, acquitted and liberated soon after the close of his two years' imprisonment at Rome, and that after some years of labor he was again arrested, and brought a prisoner to Rome, and there suffered martyrdom. As noted above, ver. 30 implies a change in the apostle's condition. If, at the end of the two years, he had been put to death, it would likely have been noted. It appears from Phil. 1 : 25; 2 : 23, 24; Philem. 22, that he expected to be released from confinement. The Epistles to Titus and Timothy indicate a later condition of the churches, and bring forward facts which point to a second imprisonment of Paul. The Epistle of Clement of Rome (Phil. 4 : 3) to the Corinthians, written about A. D. 95, says of Paul: "Having gone to the utmost bounds of the West, he at last suffered martyrdom." In a Roman writer, "the utmost bounds of the West" refers naturally to Spain or Britain. (See Rom. 15 : 21.) A fragmentary passage in the Muratorian Canon, about A. D. 180, refers to "the journey of Paul to Spain." Eusebius, the church historian, speaks of Paul coming to Rome a second time, and then suffered martyrdom. And Jerome (died A. D. 419) relates "that Paul was dismissed by Nero that he might preach the gospel in the West." No contrary tradition has come down to us. We therefore conclude that Paul was liberated A. D. 63 and probably went to Spain. Returning from the far West in A. D. 65, he visited the Greek and Asiatic churches. It was probably at Nicopolis in Epirus (Titus 3 : 12) that he was arrested the second time, A. D. 66, and sent to Rome for trial. Here he wrote his second letter to Timothy, and

was beheaded A. D. 67. See a fuller discussion in *Harmonic Arrangement of the Acts*, § 60, pp. 260-2.

A tradition relates that Peter suffered martyrdom by crucifixion at the same time Paul was beheaded. The tradition is at least doubtful. Peter appears to have been in Babylon of Chaldea, about A. D. 66, where he wrote his first epistle. As John, in the Revelation, refers to Rome under the symbolic name of Babylon, the Babylon of Peter has been supposed, especially by Roman Catholic expositors, to mean Rome. "In the third century the story began to gain ground that Peter wrote from Rome itself, till in the fourth it is mentioned in the works of the Fathers, who do not agree with each other either as to the time of his coming or to the length of his stay. The Roman church has mixed up a St. Peter and a St. Paul who were put to death under Gallienus, A. D. 260, whose feast is Oct. 3, and this has led to the idea that both of the apostles were together in Rome and suffered on the same day." (MR. FORBES, *Footsteps*, etc.)

PRACTICAL REMARKS.

1. Paul and his companions were saved, though the ship was lost. Amid the darkness and revolutions of past centuries the churches of Christ still live. (Ver. 1; Matt. 16: 18.)

2. The kindness of the heathen Maltese may well put to shame those wreckers on nominal Christian shores whose object has been to lure, destroy, and plunder. The life-saving service on our coasts partakes of the kind spirit of these ancient islanders. (Ver. 2; Eph. 4: 32.)

3. Amid doing good lurks many a temptation, and often a bite like that of a serpent. (Ver. 3; 1 Peter 4: 12-16.)

4. It accords with the dictates of reason and conscience that sin should be punished and the murderer suffer death. (Ver. 4; Gen. 4: 10, 14.)

5. "Oh, that we could deal with sin, that old serpent, which, with God's permission, so often fastens even on believers, as Paul dealt with the viper." (STARKE.) (Ver. 5; 1 Cor. 10: 13; 1 Peter 4: 12-16.)

6. Every calamity is not a judgment for

some particular sin. (Ver. 4-6; John 9: 1-3.)

7. Kindness shown to God's people will not fail to receive its reward. (Ver. 7, 8; Matt. 10: 41, 42.)

8. The presence of a religious man is a great blessing to any community. He may not, like Paul, heal diseases, but he may do the greater work of leading souls to Christ. (Ver. 8, 9; James 5: 20.)

9. In Paul we see a noble, self-possessed Christian man, who was calm in honor and dishonor, and ever diligent in doing good. (Ver. 4-9; 2 Cor. 6: 7-10.)

10. God will protect his children, and bring them all necessary blessings and honor. (Ver. 5, 10; Ps. 91: 10, 11, 14-16.)

11. It was not Castor and Pollox, but the Lord Christ who presided over Paul and the ship. (Ver. 11; 23: 11; 27: 23, 24.)

12. The wind and waves are in the hands of the Lord in behalf of his children. (Ver. 12, 13; Ps. 104: 3; 107: 23-32.)

13. Christian fellowship acts like a restoring medicine on both body and soul. (Ver. 14; 1 John 1: 3, 4; Ps. 133.)

14. The presence and sympathy of Christian brethren should excite gratitude to God, and courage in his work. (Ver. 15; 3 John 8; 1 Kings 19: 18.)

15. The Lord is able to make the chains of his persecuted followers advance his cause and redound to his glory. (Ver. 16; Prov. 16: 7.)

16. Paul, in preaching first to his countrymen who so persistently opposed him, gave us an example of overcoming evil with good. (Ver. 17-19; Rom. 12: 20, 21.)

17. We should use holy tact in striving to possess centres of influence for Christ. (Ver. 17-19; 17: 4, 12.)

18. The gospel comes, not to condemn, but to save. (Ver. 18, 19; John 3: 17.)

19. How often have chains and the Hope of Israel been brought into close relations. (Ver. 20: 16: 24, 25.)

20. In the great success of Christianity, which was so unpopular in its first stages, we see evidences of its divine origin and guidance. (Ver. 21, 22; Luke 2: 34.)

21. The preacher should faithfully do his duty, whether men will hear or forbear. (Ver. 23; Ezek. 33: 7-9.)

22. We are to sow the gospel seed though it fall on all kinds of ground, and some be-

lieve and some are hardened. (Ver. 24; Matt. 13 : 3-9; 1 Cor. 2 : 16.)

23. Such is the evil existing in the human heart that the gospel of peace makes divisions among men. (Ver. 24; Matt. 10 : 34 f.)

24. Sinners are not lost without a final warning (Ver. 25, 26; Prov. 1 : 21-33.)

25. The Holy Spirit is divine, who spake through prophets, and who now is the Guide and Comforter of believers. (Ver. 26; 1 : 16; 2 : 33.)

26. Sinners are guilty of willful unbelief. (Ver. 26, 27; John 5 : 40; 7 : 17.)

27. Paul was a missionary, and he recognized the gospel as sent unto the nations. (Ver. 28; Matt. 28 : 19, 20.)

28. In whatever station we are, we should

remember our duties to Christ and our fellow men. (Ver. 30; 1 Cor. 7 : 20-24.)

29. If the Lord opens a door for his word, let us enter with all boldness. (Ver. 31; Col. 4 : 3.)

30. The record of one's life is more important than the time and manner of one's death. Luke records not the death of either Paul or Peter. (Ver. 31.)

31. The book of the Acts is an inspired manual for both churches and individual believers. It presents the Holy Spirit working through believers in revivals, in missions, and in charities. It records the origin and organization of churches; their officers, and their government; their relations to the State and to one another, and the principles which should control their extension.

ROME.

Rome is situated on the river Tiber, seventeen miles from the sea. Ancient Rome stood mostly on the eastern bank, and in A. D. 61 it contained a population of over two millions. About one-half of these were free citizens, the rest were slaves and foreigners. Of the free citizens the senators were few; the knights, who filled most of the offices, numbered perhaps ten thousand, and the troops may be reckoned at fifteen thousand. Most of the free citizens were poor, indolent, and many of them paupers, priding themselves on their citizenship and caring for little beyond their daily bread and the games at the circus. The Jewish residents are believed to have numbered about sixty thousand. Every nationality and religion were found there. Most of the activities of life were in the hands of foreigners and slaves, some of the latter being physicians, some teachers, and others in other professions. The successful tradesmen and the skilled artisans were mostly Greek. It was in this large lower and middle class among whom Paul had his principal success. Christians at Rome for two centuries were largely Greek.

Nero, in A. D. 61, was in the seventh year of his reign, and twenty-three years of age. His true character began to show itself in the murder of his mother and other deeds of violence and shame. Burrus, the honest soldier, and Seneca, the calm and moderate philosopher, were still at the head of affairs, but their power was waning. Burrus died in A. D. 62, and not long after Seneca fell into disgrace, and at the command of Nero, A. D. 65, committed suicide. Burrus was succeeded by Rufus, a man of feeble and benevolent disposition, and Tgellinus, one of the worst characters of his age. In July, 64, occurred the great conflagration at Rome, suspected to have been the work of Nero himself, but which he charged upon the Christians, against whom he instigated a terrible persecution. What a contrast between Paul the prisoner, ever devoted to the good of others, with a conscience void of offense, and his judge, Nero, selfish, vain, indolent, vile, steeped in degradation and crime!

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